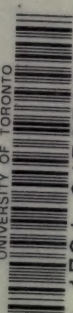


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WOMAN'S EFFORT





### A PLEASURE DEFERRED.

SOPRANIST "YOU'VE CUT MY DANCE!"

Mr. Asquith. "YES, I KNOW. THE FACT IS THE M.C. OBJECTED TO THE PATTERN OF MY WAISTCOAT, AND I HAD TO GO HOME AND CHANGE IT BUT I'LL TELL YOU WHAT! LET ME PUT YOU DOWN FOR AN EXTRA AT OUR PRIVATE SUBSCRIPTION DANCE NEXT SEASON!"

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Frontispiece.



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# WOMAN'S EFFORT

A CHRONICLE OF BRITISH WOMEN'S  
FIFTY YEARS' STRUGGLE FOR CITIZENSHIP  
(1865-1914)

BY

*Agnes Edith*  
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LATE H.M.I. (SECONDARY SCHOOLS)

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
LAURENCE HOUSMAN

ILLUSTRATED BY REPRODUCTIONS OF SOME CARTOONS FROM  
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OXFORD

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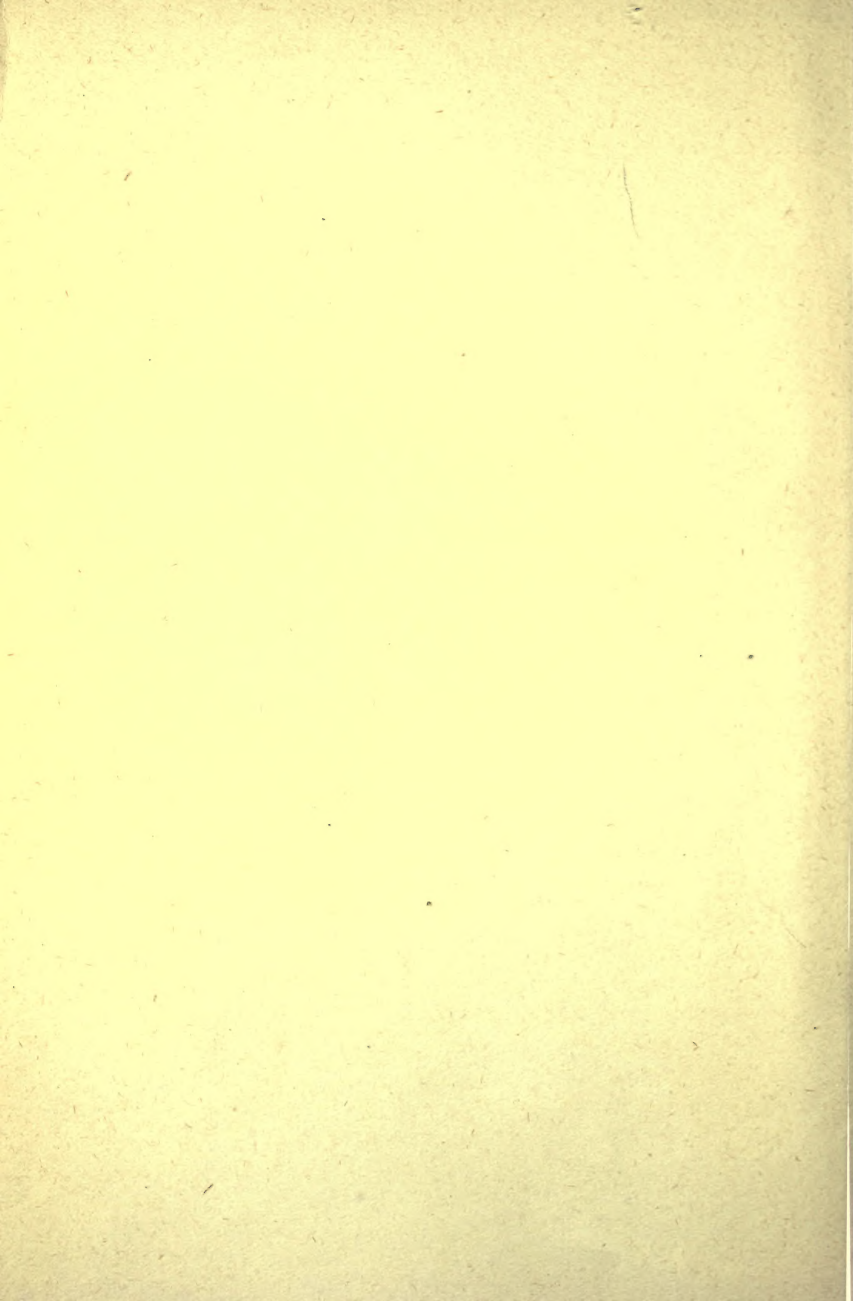
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To  
MY FELLOW-COUNTRYWOMEN,  
WHOSE SERVICES TO THE COMMUNITY,  
BOTH ACTUAL AND POTENTIAL,  
HAVE IN THE PAST  
BEEN PERHAPS TOO LIGHTLY ESTEEMED.





## PREFACE

It is perhaps as well to indicate briefly why I have attempted the difficult task of writing a chronicle of a movement whose object is to secure the political emancipation of women in this country.

To begin with, it must be clearly stated that I have done so entirely as a private individual, and not in connection with any society or organization.

The question of the education of women is intimately connected with that of their enfranchisement, and it was during over twenty years' work in the educational field, latterly as a Government Inspector, working all over the country, that I came to realize more and more that the vote was an essential condition for the well-being of women, and therefore of the community generally. So, somewhat late in the history of the movement, I became an inconspicuous worker in the ranks, until the outbreak of war put a temporary check to our activities.

In the following narrative, while I have made every effort to state facts fairly and dispassionately, I have not attempted to conceal my sympathies, and I doubt if any attempt to do so could be altogether successful. For in investigating the mass of documentary evidence available, it became abundantly clear that my task would consist largely in filling in the gaps left in the record of events supplied by the daily press, and therefore not known or understood by the public generally. The supplying of such omissions must necessarily, I feel, lay me open to a charge of being biased in my treatment of the

subject, but I only ask fair-minded readers to study the facts for themselves before passing judgment.

I shall not enter into arguments or deal with theories. My object has been to present a trustworthy account of what actually has occurred in the history of the struggle. Neither do I propose to generalize with regard to these happenings. It will be for the historian of the future to judge of those events in the perspective which the lapse of time alone can supply. They are too recent in point of time, and the "invisible event" is of too indeterminate a character, to make it possible to attempt a philosophical survey of the whole matter. This, then, is a plain, unpretentious narrative of actual incidents connected with the movement, from the time of the first timid happenings about the middle of the nineteenth century, up to the time of the outbreak of the great European War.

The history of the first thirty-five years or so has been recorded by Miss Helen Blackburn in her book entitled "Women's Suffrage," which was published in the year 1902. In order to give continuity to my narrative, and to explain the events of later years, with which the present volume will more especially deal, I have ventured to summarize the leading events of those years, but the comparatively small space occupied by this portion of the history must not mislead the reader into underestimating its importance. Those who would acquaint themselves with the details of what occurred should refer to the pages of that volume. There they will read of the patient, continuous, and entirely "constitutional" work, extending over many years, which preceded the more dramatic events of recent times.

The task of presenting these events sanely, consecutively, and fairly, has been a very difficult one. It is inevitable that this book will be criticized by friends and foes alike, both for what it says and for what it leaves unsaid. My only answer to all criticism is that I have done my best, in all sincerity, to



write a very difficult chapter of history. It is probable that some readers, even those who sympathize not only with the Suffrage movement, but with "militancy," will say that the actions of the militants were justified up to such or such a point, but that there the line ought to have been drawn, the particular point being probably a different one in each case. To such critics I would say that this is a narrative of what actually occurred, and I challenge the most astute reader to indicate the point where I should myself have drawn such a line. A glance at Part V. will show that there has been no attempt to gloss over the most serious phase of "militancy"; what I have endeavoured to do has been to indicate the motives of those who took part in the agitation and to trace the logical course of events which led up to this regrettable state of affairs.

In accounts of Parliamentary debates, little more could be done in the space at my disposal than to select the most striking statements or arguments on either side. To the interested reader, a perusal of the full official Parliamentary reports is recommended. The material I have had to draw from, in addition to that supplied by these reports and the daily press, has been chiefly the publications of the various suffrage societies, whose secretaries have unreservedly given me any help and information at their disposal. I gratefully acknowledge their assistance in this respect. I also tender my sincere thanks to the officials of the British Museum (particularly Mr. D. Baxter), who have shown me unfailing courtesy and helpfulness over a prolonged period. The officials of the Liberal Publication department, and of the Libraries of both Houses of Parliament, have also given kind assistance in verifying specific items. Lastly, I acknowledge with special gratitude the generous assistance which various friends have given at different stages of the work by offering criticisms and suggestions.

In conclusion, I cannot refrain from quoting the following extract from Emerson's *Essay on Compensation* :

“ Our strength grows out of our weakness. The indignation which arms itself with secret forces does not awaken until we are pricked and stung and sorely assailed. . . . Blame is safer than praise. I hate to be defended in a newspaper. As long as all that is said is said against me, I feel a certain assurance of success. . . . In general, every evil to which we do not succumb is a benefactor. . . . The history of persecution is a history of endeavours to cheat nature, to make water run up hill, to twist a rope of sand. It makes no difference whether the actors be many or one, a tyrant or a mob. . . . It (the mob) persecutes a principle; it would whip a right; it would tar and feather justice. . . . The inviolate spirit turns their spite against the wrong-doers. The martyr cannot be dishonoured. Every lash inflicted is a tongue of fame; every prison a more illustrious abode; every burned book or house enlightens the world; every suppressed or expunged word reverberates through the earth from side to side. Hours of sanity are always arriving to communities, as to individuals, when the truth is seen, and the martyrs are justified.”

It may be that amidst all the turmoil and strife of the present time, that hour is even now striking.

A. E. METCALFE.

FOREST HILL,

*March, 1917.*

## INTRODUCTION

IN the summer of 1914, when the Suffrage agitation had reached a stage of bitterness and revolt which pointed to imminent tragedy, war came, and democratic government ceased. From that date on, men and women alike became participants in the blessings of unrepresentative government, and so long as Parliament and the male electorate acquiesced in this logical development from a bad past, as a thing generally necessary to salvation, the grievance which the women Suffragists had against them was temporarily removed, or was, at all events, different in kind. Men were, for a time at least, submitting to government removed, to all intents and purposes, from electoral control; it had become "patriotic" neither to criticize the acts of the Government nor to threaten its life.

Thus there was some logical ground for letting the women's political claims stand over until representative government re-emerged—until, that is to say, men began once more to make and to unmake Governments in their own image, and to adjust the Administration to the mind of the electorate. As soon as they began to do that (and we had not long to wait), as soon as the patriotic emotion, which had caused them to accept the emergency measures of Government with an almost blind faith, wore itself out—from that time on, the women's claim for representation was back once more upon its old footing. And while upon the affirmative side it had gained, owing to the new social conditions produced by war, a moral and practical standing which even erstwhile opponents had to



admit, it had also, upon the negative side, made demonstrably foolish many of the stock arguments of the Anti-Suffragist. Not only was the price paid by women, the risk run by women, and the indispensable service rendered by women under war conditions, made plain to average minds more open to ocular demonstration than to theoretic argument; but something was also done upon the other side, which helped to make ancient doctrine look foolish in the face of modern fact. For quite early in the war we had the magnificent spectacle of the whole country united upon one point at any rate—namely, that to the married men, the natural protectors of their wives, should be conceded, not the first, but the second place in the great call to arms which preceded general conscription; and the unmarried, who had no wives to protect, were sent out first and foremost, to fight for the wives and families of others. It was indeed by the promulgation of this new doctrine, which received the solid support of the married men among Trades Unionists, that conscription was made secure of its acceptance at the hands of a reluctant Labour Party.

And meanwhile men politicians, having submitted themselves for a time to as unrepresentative a course of procedure as seemed good for the help of their country in its difficulties, grew not only tired of their self-abnegation, but doubtful of its results. Legislation, passed with the same breathless speed as had been inculcated by the Government a year before for the carrying of the Cat and Mouse Act, had led only to similar results of wastefulness and blunder; and accordingly Amending Acts became the order of the day, criticism once more a public duty, and finally the overthrow of an "irreplacable" Government, together with its "indispensable" head, an imperative necessity.

Thus, with inchoate scramblings, the democratic principle began little by little to reassert itself. Having tried the other thing, men found that it did not work well—that a Government released from control grew out of touch with the popular will,

although in origin as representative of its electorate as husbands are supposed to be of their wives and brothers of their sisters. But put to the test in politics, this automatic method of representation was not found to wear well. Presuming on its representative origin, the Government did unrepresentative things, even as man, with similar presumption, has done from time immemorial in relation to the interests of women. But automatic representation, it would seem, cannot any more in the one case than in the other give permanent satisfaction.

And so, maybe, men will now have more sympathy and more understanding for the grievances of the women whom they have governed unrepresentatively in the past. If they do so they will be wise. Only let them be wise in time, and remember that the Woman's Suffrage movement came before the war, and has therefore a prior right, in point of time, for its electoral claim to be considered than any later electoral claim which the conditions of war have brought into being. And not in point of time only. The woman's claim has been proved during the war, not merely in theory, but in practice. Before the war, Anti-Suffragists said that women's services were not sufficiently essential in war-time for them to be given the vote. That contention has gone. Mr. Asquith himself has said that their work is not only essential, but "just as essential" as that of the men fighting in the trenches. When he made that pronouncement he invited women, as munition workers, to place themselves under fire; for even by the law of nations a Zeppelin has the right to drop bombs on munition factories. Mr. Lloyd George gave a similar charter of right to the enemy to rain fire on women when he boasted that he had made London "a great place of arms." You cannot make that boast about a city, now that war has gone up from the earth into the heavens, without exposing its inhabitants to a corresponding risk of destruction.

Is it then to be said, when all this horror is over, that we placed women in the firing line, but refused them the vote?

Or that we consider the change of conditions which war brings down on them, and the resultant industrial conditions when we return to peace, matters upon which men only have a right to decide? And can we honestly believe that a Government unrepresentative of women will be capable of adjusting rightly and equitably woman's place in the new world, and the new era which lies before us?

If we do so, our delusion will be short-lived. The women's agitation, if our politicians continue to deny them a place in the Constitution, may take a different form from what it has done in the past; but it will not be less serious or less formidable.

The fundamental error revealed in the following pages of suffrage history was the inability of Government to take seriously, when it arose, a movement which is destined to be permanent in the world's history. What delayed the open expression of that movement more than anything else was the artificial segregation of women in the past, and their consequent lack of a corporate consciousness. That consciousness was the greatest gift which the Suffrage struggle brought to them; that consciousness has been intensified, uplifted, and broadened by their greater opportunities for self-realization under the conditions of war. You cannot segregate them again, you cannot deprive them of that higher corporate consciousness which—regarded yesterday as a rather unwomanly development—has now won the admiring recognition of the whole nation. Womanhood has moved forward in the last decade to a new stage of evolution, and those who are its leaders are but the articulate expression of the great mass—they no longer supplicate and pray; they demand, and they will have.

LAURENCE HOUSMAN



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# WOMAN'S EFFORT

## PART I

### *CONSTITUTIONAL WORK*

(1865-1905)

#### **The Reform Act of 1832**

It was the Reform Act of 1832 which, by the introduction of the word "male" before the word "person," definitely excluded women from the privileges which that Act conferred, and thus brought about the "egregious anomaly," (to use the phrase of Mr. J. W. Fox, M.P. for Oldham at that time,) that while a woman could be vested with supreme political authority, no other woman could exercise the simplest political function. Mr. Richard Cobden, the prominent upholder of the Anti-Corn Law movement, also commented in his speeches on this anomaly, and expressed the wish that things were otherwise. The first Parliament elected under the new Act lost no time in introducing the same restrictive word "male" into the Municipal Corporation Act of 1835, thereby depriving women of the Municipal vote, which at that time they were entitled to exercise.

#### **Earliest Leaflet**

The forerunner of the mass of literature which has flooded the country of late years, appeared about the year 1847, in the form of a leaflet, which drew attention to the "sad mismanagement of the affairs of the country," which should, in the opinion of the writer, lead men to doubt their own capacity for governing a nation alone, and to apprehend the

need there was in the public councils for the qualities to be found in the female portion of the race. Various articles appeared from that time forward in contemporary reviews, and other pamphlets made their appearance with increasing frequency. In 1858 the *Englishwoman's Journal* (which afterwards became the *Englishwoman's Review*) was founded by the enterprise of four women, one of whom was Miss Leigh Smith (Mrs. Bodichon, one of the founders of Girton College), who sought by this means to focus the growing interests and aspirations of educated women of that generation. In connection with that journal was formed a Society for the Employment of Women, one of the first practical expressions of the view that there is nothing derogatory to women in working for their living, and one of the first attempts to furnish practical assistance in learning how to work. (It must be borne in mind that the Suffrage movement in its early days was essentially an upper middle class movement, where conventions and prejudices had a particularly strong foothold. The spread of the movement to those classes where work is not a matter of choice, but of necessity, was to come later.)

The necessity for better education for members of their own sex led thoughtful women of the time of which we are speaking, to devote their energies to educational work, and many women whose names have since become famous in this connection, while sympathizing with the demand for political emancipation, nevertheless took no prominent part in the movement, being occupied in the no less important task of preparing the way for such a reform by raising up a new generation of informed and enlightened womanhood.

### **First Petitions Presented to Parliament**

A certain Miss Mary Smith, a lady of rank and fortune, residing in Stanmore, Yorkshire, was apparently quite alive to the situation created by the Reform Act of 1832, for on August 3 of that year Mr. Hunt presented a petition to Parlia-



ment on her behalf which gave several excellent reasons why "every unmarried female possessing the necessary pecuniary qualification" should exercise the right of electing Members of Parliament (*Hansard*, 3s., Col. 1,086, Vol. 14).

On broader lines was the action of Mrs. Abiah Higginbotham, who, as chairman of a public meeting held in Sheffield some twenty years later, signed a petition on behalf of the female inhabitants of that borough, praying the House of Lords "to take into serious consideration the propriety of enacting an electoral law which (should) include adult females within its provisions" (*Lords' Journals*, February 13, 1851, p. 23, Vol. 83).

In the autumn of 1865, Mr. John Stuart Mill was elected Member for Westminster. He had had the temerity to mention Woman's Suffrage in his election address, and heartened by this, Suffragists drafted a petition which Mr. Mill was asked to present to the House, praying for the representation of all householders, irrespective of sex. Signatures to the number of 1,449 having been procured to this petition, it was conveyed to the House in a cab by two of the signatories, whose hearts apparently failed them on arriving at their destination, for, while awaiting Mr. Mill's arrival, they hid it under the stall of a sympathetic apple-woman. It was presented on June 7, 1866, the day on which the House went into Committee on the Representation of the People Bill, usually known as the Household Franchise Bill.

### **Mr. Mill's Amendment to the Bill of 1867**

It was not till May of the following year, however, that Mr. Mill moved his Amendment to that Bill, to leave out the word "man," which had been substituted for the "male person" of the Act of 1832, and to insert the word "person" instead thereof. This, the first discussion in Parliament of the question, marked an epoch in the history of the movement, Mr. Mill's presentment of his case—as, indeed, might

be expected of the author of "The Subjection of Women"—being masterly and forcible. The motion was defeated by a majority of 123.

### **First Woman Suffrage Committee formed in Manchester**

Meanwhile, early in the same year, through the energy of Dr. Pankhurst and others, the first committee for the promotion of the enfranchisement of women had been formed in Manchester. Miss Lydia Becker was appointed secretary, and from that time forward until her death in 1890, she devoted her whole time and energies to the cause. A committee was also formed in London, and the first indication of the activities of these societies is to be found in the presentation of three more petitions to Parliament, one of which was signed exclusively by women householders, to the number of 1,605. Throughout the year 1867, the work of organization proceeded apace. Committees sprang up in other large towns, and in 1868 they amalgamated under the title of the National Society for Women's Suffrage. It is interesting to read that at the formation of the Bristol committee, Mr. Commissioner Hill, at whose house the meeting was held, urged those present to join the Society, giving as a reason that the cause would require their support for a very short time only. The claim was so clear and reasonable, he said, that it had but to be brought before Parliament to be granted.

### **First Public Meeting**

The first public meeting convened in support of the enfranchisement of women also took place in Manchester, at the Free Trade Hall (April, 1868). The chair was taken by the Mayor of Salford, and a resolution was moved by Miss Becker to the effect that the exclusion of women from the exercise of the franchise in the election of Members of Parliament being unjust in principle and inexpedient in practice, the meeting was of opinion that the right of voting should be



## THE LADIES' ADVOCATE.

MRS. BULL. "LOR, MR. MILL! WHAT A LOVELY SPEECH YOU *DID* MAKE. I DO DECLARE I HADN'T THE SLIGHTEST NOTION WE WERE SUCH MISERABLE CREATURES. NO ONE CAN SAY IT WAS *YOUR* FAULT THAT THE CASE BROKE DOWN."

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granted to them on the same terms as it was, or might be, granted to men. Another resolution pledged those present to urge women possessing legal qualifications, to claim to be put on the Parliamentary Register, and this was supported by Mr. Jacob Bright, M.P.

### Testing Existing Acts of Parliament

A determined effort was accordingly made to establish the right of women householders to vote for Members of Parliament, in view of the fact that an Act of Parliament of 1850 had provided that "in all Acts words importing the masculine gender shall be deemed and taken to include females, unless the contrary be *expressly provided*." As no such express provision was to be found in the Act of 1867, it was contended that, as the ratepaying clauses of the Act, which used the masculine pronoun throughout, applied equally to women ratepayers, the voting clauses must also apply to them. Accordingly, a large number of women in various places sent in their claim to be placed on the register of voters. These claims were invariably rejected by the revising barrister, and four cases for appeal, (the best known being that of *Chorlton v. Lings*,) were argued before the Court of Common Pleas in November, 1868. *The Times*, in an article of November 3, made the remarkable admission that if the claim were refused, the nation would be "formally and in the light of day committing itself, through its judicial tribunal, to the dangerous doctrine that *representation need not go along with taxation*." Yet that is exactly what happened, for in each case the Court upheld the decision of the revising barristers. Similar efforts were made the same year in Scotland, and an appeal was carried to the Supreme Court, with the like ill-success.

This made it clear that efforts must be made to induce the new Parliament to introduce a Bill, which should definitely establish the desired right, and work was accordingly undertaken with this end in view.

### **Restoration of the Municipal Franchise**

The restoration of the Municipal franchise was the chief event of the year 1869, and it was due to the exertions of Mr. Jacob Bright, who, somewhat to his own surprise, found himself supported by the Government of the day. His Amendment therefore passed without a dissentient word. The removal of women's disabilities with regard to the Parliamentary vote was at the time regarded as a natural sequence to this event. "It will be a grand step," wrote Miss Becker to a fellow-worker at the time, with cheery optimism.

### **"The Women's Suffrage Journal"**

This was the first paper having for its object the advocacy of the enfranchisement of women. It first appeared in March, 1870, and for twenty years it continued to record the activities of the movement, being ably edited by Miss Becker.

### **Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill of 1870**

During this time, petitions continued to be signed, and the demand for legislation was made with ever increasing insistency.

In May, 1870, a Bill was indeed introduced by Mr. Jacob Bright, supported, among others, by Sir Charles Dilke, and it passed its Second Reading by a majority of 33. On going into Committee, however, it called forth the hostility of W. E. Gladstone. An urgent whip was sent round to his followers, summoning them to attend and vote against the Bill, and an adverse vote was recorded against it.

The Bill was reintroduced in each of the three succeeding years of that Parliament, and in each case it was rejected.

### Propaganda Work

It is impossible in a limited space to do justice to the immense amount of effort and time which was sacrificed to the movement throughout these years, by men and women alike. The latter in particular, feeling that they could best plead their own cause, bravely came out from the shelter of their homes to organize and speak at meetings up and down the country, and in their heroic advocacy of the cause they had at heart, faced alike ridicule, curiosity, and hostility. It was in 1870 that Mrs. Fawcett, as the young wife of the Member for Brighton, first made her appearance as a public speaker, and many other women in prominent positions also identified themselves with the movement.

It is interesting to note that the name of Florence Nightingale stands first among the signatories to a memorial addressed to Mr. Gladstone in 1871.

The movement suffered a severe loss, in 1873, by the death of the first champion of women's rights—Mr. J. S. Mill. Suffragists, however, took heart of grace from the fact that the number of Members who voted for the Bill of 1872 was larger than on any previous occasion, and they were still further encouraged when the General Election of 1874 resulted in the return of an increased number of supporters.

### Parliament of 1874

The General Election of February, 1874, resulted in the return of the Conservatives to power, with Mr. Disraeli as Prime Minister. The movement had, however, lost two other ardent supporters in addition to Mr. Mill, for both Mr. Jacob Bright and Mr. Eastlake, who had seconded his Bill in 1870, failed to secure re-election, as had also Mr. Fawcett and several other friends.

Mr. W. Forsyth, Q.C., however, took charge of a measure, but was unsuccessful in securing a place in the first year of

the new Parliament. A debate took place in April of the following year, when in spite of the issue of vigorous whips, one from the Conservative, and the other from the Liberal side of the House, the hostile majority fell to 35.

In the next year (1876) the majority recorded against the Bill was increased to 87, but the number of Members who voted against it was exactly the same—viz., 152.

Before it was again introduced, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Sir Stafford Northcote, received a deputation of ladies, whom he treated with courtesy, but informed that he did not consider the moment ripe for reopening the great electoral question, a formula which has in subsequent years suffered much repetition.

The Bill, however, came on for discussion, and evidence of the increasing interest which the subject evoked is to be found in the fact that opponents created an uproar as the time for taking a division drew near. When the supporters of the Bill realized that it was not the intention of the others to listen to argument, they succeeded in preventing a division from being taken, and the hour of closing struck, while Mr. Courtney kept his feet, and endeavoured to make himself heard, amid stormy cries of "'Vide, 'Vide!" But division there was none.

The following year, another debate took place, and a division was reached, in which the hostile majority was somewhat reduced. In 1879, the procedure was varied by the introduction of a resolution by Mr. Courtney, which met with a like fate to the Bills which had preceded it.

Meanwhile, propaganda work of a solid nature had been going forward, and much satisfaction was felt in Suffrage circles when it was found that the General Election of 1880, resulting in the return of the Liberals to power, saw many persistent opponents left out in the cold, while nearly all the prominent friends of the cause were swept back into the House. As subsequent events have proved, however, it mattered little



which party was in power, for it could always be averred that such and such a time was not the "right" one, or that time was lacking, or that some other time would provide the unique opportunity for which women had already waited so long. But we are speaking of the eighties, and must not anticipate.

### **Parliament of 1880**

Encouraged by the result of the General Election, and believing in the hopes held out to them that the approaching Reform Bill would offer a means of abolishing the disabilities under which they lay, the women Suffragists of those days surpassed their former efforts in strenuous work for their cause. Great demonstrations of women were held in various large cities, including Manchester, Bristol, Edinburgh, and Glasgow, at which memorials to the Government were unanimously adopted. Men were present at these meetings as spectators only and on paying for their seats.

No debate took place in the House until July 6, 1883, when Mr. Hugh Mason, after prolonged efforts, succeeded in securing a day for a debate on his resolution in favour of extending the Parliamentary franchise to those women who were entitled to vote in matters of Local Government. This was regarded as a preliminary skirmish before the battle impending in connection with the Reform Bill of the following year, and the fact that the result was much more favourable than in the previous Parliament cheered the workers for the coming struggle. The hostile majority on this occasion fell to 16. Resolutions passed at a great Conference of Liberal Associations, held at Leeds in October, also put new heart into them. They had need of courage.

### **Mr. Woodall's Amendment**

When, on June 12, 1884, Mr. Woodall moved an Amendment to the Reform Bill, otherwise known as the County Franchise Bill, to the effect that words importing the masculine gender

should include women, where the right of voting for the election of Members of Parliament was concerned, he found himself opposed by the Government, as indeed it had for long been apparent he would be. Mr. Gladstone himself made a weighty speech against the Amendment, the burden of which was, "The cargo which the vessel carries is, in our opinion, a cargo as large as she can safely carry."

"I offer the Amendment the strongest opposition in my power," he added in concluding his speech, "and I must disclaim and renounce all responsibility for the measure, should my hon. friend succeed in inducing the Committee to adopt it." The rejection of the Amendment by the large majority of 136, and the defection of no less than 104 known "friends," was the immediate outcome of this pronouncement.

Thus, after every legitimate and constitutional means had been tried to induce Parliament to deal with the grievances of women, a greater inequality than ever was introduced between men and women, and this for the second time in the history of the movement. In this case, the gates at which women had been knocking, swung back to admit some two million additional men voters (making some seven million in all), and were relentlessly shut once more in their faces. Nearly thirty years were to elapse before untold toil and suffering should put them in a position to prevent the reopening of those gates to others while they themselves remained outside. Much was to happen before even this mitigated triumph was to be secured.

The immediate result was a severe set-back to the movement, for though the next Parliament contained 314 "known friends" (since which time known friends of the movement have always been in a majority over avowed opponents), and though the workers continued their efforts with marvellous patience and courage, no less than twenty years elapsed before the question again became prominent. During that period, it is true, only two years (1894 and 1898) passed with-

out some effort being made by Parliamentary friends of the movement to secure discussion of the subject, either by means of a Bill or a Resolution. Various devices were, however, adopted to postpone discussion. Either the day was taken by the Government, or the measure was "blocked," or it was crowded out, or, as on one occasion, the House rose for the Easter recess the day preceding the date secured.

During this period of twenty years, five General Elections took place, but Liberal and Conservative administrations were alike obdurate or apathetic on the subject; and on two occasions only, of which there will be something to say presently, were there Second Reading debates, leading to a division.

### **Formation of Various Women's Political Organizations**

Meanwhile, what were those most intimately concerned doing to advance their cause? Within three years from the passing of the Representation of the People's Act of 1884, several Women's Political Associations sprang up, in support of the various political factions in the State. In 1885, the Primrose League instituted its Ladies' Grand Council, thus distinctly inviting the co-operation of women in its special work. In 1887, various Liberal Women's Associations which had been formed in different parts of the country, were amalgamated under the title of the Women's Liberal Federation, and about the same time the Women's Liberal Unionist Association was formed. Members of these Associations, in some cases no doubt, threw themselves into political work with the object of advancing the prospects of their men-folk. Others doubtless worked for the principles in which they themselves believed, and for love of the work. Others, again, felt possibly that by such means they were proving their capacity for entering into the larger life from which they had hitherto been excluded, and adopted this work as a means to a definite end—the franchise. But whatever

the motive, it is undeniable that the activity women have displayed in the political field has helped to throw down one of the old strongholds of resistance, namely, the contention that politics are not in any way their concern.

### First Anti-Suffrage Protest

Evidence of the vitality of the question of "Female Suffrage," in spite of all discouragement, is to be found in the fact that the June number of the *Nineteenth Century* (1889) contained the first protest against the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women, with the signatures of 104 well-known society ladies. Shortly afterwards, the *Fortnightly Review* published a counter list, containing 600 names from a list of 2,000 which had been collected in the space of a fortnight. This list contained the names of titled women, wives of Church dignitaries, Poor Law Guardians, women engaged in educational, medical, literary or artistic work, business and working women, and many others.

### Women and Local Government: Case of Lady Sandhurst and Others

In the November of 1888, subsequent to the passing into law of the Local Government Act of that year, a Committee was formed to secure the return of women to the first London County Council, with the result that three women—Lady Sandhurst, Miss Cobden, and Alderman Miss Cons—were duly elected. The first named was unseated on the petition of Mr. Beresford Hope (the defeated candidate for Brixton), on the sole ground that she was a woman, the case being heard in the Court of Queen's Bench in March, 1889, and carried to the Court of Appeal the following May, where the decision of the lower Court was upheld. Lady Sandhurst (who, it may incidentally be mentioned, had twenty-three baby-farms under her special care) accordingly withdrew from public life; but it is interesting to record that the following September,



the Freedom of the City was conferred on her by the City of Dublin, "as a token of the great and beneficial influence she had exercised on public life."

After the decision of the Appeal Court, Miss Cobden and Miss Cons ceased to attend as members the meetings of the Council and its Committees, though the latter, by special invitation, continued her work on the Housing Committee, as a visitor.

In February of the following year (1890) both ladies retook their seats on the Council, relying on Clause 73 of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1882, which stated that a municipal election not called in question within twelve months "shall be deemed to have been to all intents a good and valid election." However, Sir Walter de Souza, acting as a "common informer," sued them for penalties of £250 each. The case of *Souza v. Cobden* was tried in November, with the result that the Judge pronounced the election valid, but nevertheless imposed a fine of £25 for each of the votes Miss Cobden had given. The case was carried to the Appeal Court in April, 1891, when it was dismissed with costs; but the Lord Chief Justice characterized the Appeal as a "very proper" one, and reduced the penalties to 10s. a vote, and the same ruling covered Miss Cons' case.

The history of this case is particularly instructive, for two reasons. It disproves the assertion, frequently made, that the possession of the vote necessarily involves the right to sit on the body in question, and the fact that women sufficiently public-spirited to give their services in this manner, could be penalized and fined for so doing, is evidence enough of the insecurity of women's position under existing laws.

It may be mentioned that out of the "Committee" originally formed in 1888 to secure the return of women as County Councillors, has developed, by successive stages, the present Women's Local Government Society, which, as its name implies, specially concerns itself with the promotion of

women's participation in Local Government. It was not until 1907 that an Act was passed providing that neither sex nor marriage should be a disqualification for election to County or Borough Councils, Dr. Shipman, M.P., being chiefly responsible for this measure. In 1907 and 1911 similar Acts were passed for Scotland and Ireland.

### Death of Miss Becker

In the year 1890, the movement suffered another severe loss in the death, after some years of failing health, of that enthusiastic worker, Miss Lydia Becker, to whose tireless efforts, through all these years of deferred hope, it owed so much. Thus, she did not live to see the question seriously brought before Parliament again after the defeat of Mr. Woodall's Amendment in 1884, though it was owing to her efforts that a Parliamentary Committee had been formed three years later—*i.e.*, in 1887. It was thanks to the efforts of this Committee that a Bill was brought forward in 1891, Mr. Woodall having secured a place for a certain Wednesday in May. In the words of *Punch*, however, a "pretty little game" was played a few days previously, whereby the "Women's Rights men" were completely "dished." The little game on this occasion consisted in Mr. Gladstone insisting that the Government, which had moved to appropriate other Wednesdays, should take all or none. So the allotted day had to go.

At this period, both Lord Salisbury and Mr. Balfour made public pronouncements as to the necessity for dealing with Women's Suffrage, whenever the general question of the franchise should be brought up.

### Sir Albert Rollit's Bill of 1892

In the following year—*i.e.*, on April 27, 1892—one of the two debates referred to above took place. Sir Algernon Borthwick (Lord Glenesk) was in charge of the question,

and the best place having been secured by Sir Albert Rollit, he introduced a Bill intended to confer the Parliamentary franchise on women municipal voters. A strong opposition whip was sent out two days before the debate, signed by ten Members on each side of the House, and a vigorously worded letter from Mr. Gladstone to Mr. Samuel Smith, who was chosen to move the rejection of the Bill, was also widely circulated. Among those who spoke against and for the Bill respectively, were Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour. It was rejected by the comparatively small majority of 23.

### Organization of a Giant Petition

Encouraged, however, by this somewhat more favourable result, the workers in the movement cast about for further means of advocating it, and hit upon the idea of procuring signatures on a large scale, and from women of all parties and all classes, to an appeal to be addressed to Members of Parliament, and to be brought to their immediate notice, if possible, by being presented at the Bar of the House by chosen delegates. Some idea of the magnitude of the labour involved may be gained when it is stated that between three and four thousand persons were concerned in collecting the signatures, which eventually numbered 257,596,<sup>1</sup> nearly every constituency in Great Britain, and many in Ireland, being represented. Among the signatures were to be found those of Heads of Women's Colleges, of Head Mistresses of High and other Public Schools for girls, of eminent women in the medical and literary professions, of women serving on Boards of Guardians and School Boards, and of many others of wide social influence. When the question of presenting this petition at the Bar of the House was propounded by Viscount Wolmer (Lord Selborne) to Mr. Speaker, it was found that no precedent for such a course could be found, and the utmost

<sup>1</sup> The figure is not included in the table given on p. 20, as the petition was not formally presented to the House.

that could be promised was that, at a suitable time, it should be placed in the Library of the House. Eventually it was exhibited in Westminster Hall, in May, 1896, on the eve of the introduction of Mr. Faithfull Begg's Bill, though no one seemed quite to know who had been responsible for this concession. However, Members came and looked at it, and went their way—and the date assigned to the Bill was duly absorbed by the Government. But we anticipate.

### **The Parliament of 1892**

Meanwhile, the Parliament elected in 1892 had been wholly barren of results as far as this question was concerned. It has indeed the distinction of being the only one in the whole history of the movement in which no debate took place. However, it passed one Act, which incidentally bore on the general position. This was the Local Government Act of 1894, which completed the scheme for Local County Government in Great Britain. Mr. W. S. B. McLaren brought forward a clause, which was duly incorporated, making it possible for married women to be placed on the Register, provided that both husband and wife were not qualified in respect of the same property.

### **Mr. Faithfull Begg's Bill of 1897**

The other Second Reading debate which took place in the twenty years succeeding the passage of the Reform Bill of 1884, to which reference was made a few pages back, occurred in the year 1897, when Mr. Faithfull Begg was again successful in the ballot, and reintroduced his Bill for the Enfranchisement of Women Householders. For practically the first time, a favourable vote was recorded, for though many friends were absent on this occasion, and though an adverse whip, signed by ten Members taken equally from both sides of the House, was sent round beforehand, the Second Reading was passed, on February 3, by a majority of 71.



The Bill was set down for Committee on June 23, but the celebration of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria absorbed that date, and a later one was appointed. Opponents of the measure, however, succeeded in prolonging discussion on some trivial matters, until the time at the disposal of Private Members was exhausted. By this "undignified shuffle," as *The Times* described it, the matter was again indefinitely postponed.

### **Formation of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies**

Those who had the cause at heart did not, however, cease in their efforts to advance it by every means they could think of. The organization of memorials, petitions, and the improvement of the machinery of their Societies, gave rise to much anxious thought and zealous work. In the autumn of 1897, all societies which made Women's Suffrage their sole object on a non-party basis, some sixteen in all, amalgamated as the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies, each constituent society having a definite area in which to work. The declared policy of this Union was to place the question "in such a position that no Government, of whatever party, (should) be able to touch questions relating to representation, without at the same time removing the electoral disabilities of women." (For the sake of convenience, this organization will be referred to in subsequent pages as the "National Union.")

### **General Election of 1900**

A prominent part was taken in the General Election of 1900 by women, particularly by the wives of those Candidates who were absent at the seat of war in South Africa. Not only did they organize electioneering work, and themselves undertake many of the humbler tasks connected with such work, but many made their mark as speakers on the questions of

the day. After the election was over, their work was referred to in highly appreciative terms by many Members belonging to all political parties, and even the First Lord of the Treasury speaking at a meeting at the Westminster Town Hall, congratulated the "ladies," no less than the "gentlemen," on what they had achieved.

### **Parliament Elected 1900**

The new Parliament did not include three former leaders of the Bill, for Mr. Courtney, Mr. Woodall, and Mr. Faithfull Begg did not secure re-election, and several other constant friends of the movement were also absent when Parliament reassembled.<sup>1</sup>

There is very little to record in the way of progress during the years in which Lord Salisbury's administration was in power (1901-1905). In 1901, Sir Charles Dilke introduced his Adult Suffrage Bill for the first time. This he reintroduced, sometimes twice a year, on twelve occasions in all, but only once, in 1907, was a Second Reading reached. After Sir Charles Dilke's death in 1910, Sir W. Byles took charge of this hardy annual, and reintroduced it in the three succeeding years. Thus it fared no better when the Liberals were in power than during Lord Salisbury's administration, when indeed it could hardly be expected that room for so sweeping a measure could be found.

Three other Bills were introduced during the years 1901-1905, by Mr. Galloway, Colonel Denny, and Mr. Crooks, but none of them made any progress, or so much as provoked any discussion in the House.

<sup>1</sup> It is at this point that Miss Blackburn's narrative ceases, and I hereby acknowledge my indebtedness to her book for supplying the material for most of the foregoing summary.—A. E. M.

### Petitions

During the same period, a large number of petitions from various large towns and from various associations were presented to Parliament. It was invariably directed that these should "lie on the table," where accordingly they lay, and where indeed they may still be lying, for aught that appears to the contrary.

For the sake of convenience, and for the information of those who attribute importance to the presentation of petitions, a complete list is here given of those presented to Parliament, both for and against the enfranchisement of women, from the year 1890 up to the year of the outbreak of the European war. This list is based on a return which was laid on the table of the House on November 9, 1906. The figures of subsequent years have been added, as have also those referring to petitions against the granting of the vote to women. (These figures have been supplied by the courtesy of officials of the Petitions Committee.)

The list includes petitions for and against particular Bills, as well as petitions relating to the general principle. It should be noted that many petitions in favour, emanating from the inhabitants of towns, or from public meetings in various parts of the country, bear one signature only, generally that of some prominent citizen, or of the chairman of the meeting in question.

The years 1910 and 1911 are remarkable for a large number of petitions from City and Town Councils, in addition to the still larger number of resolutions passed in these years by such bodies. (See p. 171.)

FOR.			AGAINST.	
<i>Year.</i>	<i>No. of Petitions.</i>	<i>No. of Signatures.</i>	<i>No. of Petitions.</i>	<i>No. of Signatures.</i>
1890	165	3,127	..	..
1891	147	3,277	..	..
1892	253	7,313	..	..
1893	344	19,765	..	..
1894	12	4,602	..	..
1895	16	312	..	..
1896	29	1,459 (a)	..	..
1897	1,289	43,399	1	1
1898	19	853	2	2
1899	192	6,157	..	..
1900	5	7	..	..
1901	21	30,178	..	..
1902	11	39,079	..	..
1903	10	13,990	1	1
1904	15	11,946	1	1
1905	55	8,153	..	..
1906	43	3,199	..	..
1907	62	1,538	2	5 (b)
1908	97	1,965	..	..
1909	94	28,449	2	337,018 (c)
1910	274	288,736	1	1,829
1911	42	6,279	1	53,553
1912	7	487 (d)	1	51,425
1913	51	90	..	..
1914	..	..	..	..
	3,253 (e)	524,360	12 (f)	443,835

(a) The giant petition of 1896, containing over a quarter of a million signatures, is not included, since it was not presented to the House. See p. 15.

(b) Two petitions this year, one said to be signed by 21,000 and the other by 16,500 persons, were presented to Parliament on March 5 and 22 respectively. The former was rejected as "informal," and the latter was reported as containing two signatures only, the remainder being rejected, as the Prayer of the Petition did not appear on every sheet.

(c) This number was reported to the House by the Petitions Committee subject to the reservation that, batches of signatures being



### Two more Debates

On March 16, 1904, a silence on the subject in Parliament which had lasted for seven years was broken by Sir Charles McLaren, in moving a Resolution in these terms: "That the disabilities of women in respect of the Parliamentary franchise ought to be removed by legislation." He was seconded by Colonel Denny, and supported by five other Members. The opposition was led by Mr. Labouchere, and included three others. Mr. Labouchere, in the course of his remarks, referred to Darwin's theories, and observed that it had taken man millions of years to develop from the worm, and were they to give women votes, he asked, in the hope that in some more millions of years they would develop into intelligent voters?

On the Resolution being put to the vote, the Ayes numbered 182 and the Noes 68, the Resolution being thus carried by a majority of 114. This was the best majority yet recorded, but a Resolution had of course no legislative value, and nothing further was heard of it.

Among those who recorded a favourable vote were Mr.

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in the same handwriting, the rules of the House had not been complied with. Since 1909, the rule in question has been altered, and such signatures as appear to be in the same handwriting are no longer counted at all.

(d) The giant petition collected on the Women's March from Edinburgh to London in this year is not included, since it was not presented to the House.

(e) Of this number, 864 were officially signed.

(f) Of this number, 5 were officially signed.

Somewhat different from these petitions was the Women's Franchise Declaration, of 1906-07, which was organized by a Committee working independently of all Suffrage Societies, Miss Clementina Black being the Honorary Secretary. The *Tribune* opened its columns to notices and letters on the subject, and even lent a room for an office. An immense amount of work and energy was devoted to this project, and many thousands of signatures were received, notably from women graduates, medical practitioners, and women holding public positions.

Lloyd George, Mr. McKenna, and Mr. Winston Churchill (*Hansard*, Col. 1,367, Vol. 131).

In the following year (1905), Mr. Bamford Slack having secured the fourteenth place in the ballot, introduced a Bill providing that, "in all acts relating to the qualifications and registration of voters . . . wherever words occur which import the masculine gender, the same shall be held to include women." In introducing it he said he was appalled at the extraordinary abuse of the forms of the House, which had taken place to avoid discussion of the subject, and begged Members to see that a great wrong was redressed. The Bill was the second order of the day (May 12), that which preceded it being one to provide that carts should carry a tail light at night. The debate on this comparatively trivial measure was so protracted by Mr. Labouchere, Sir F. Banbury, Mr. Cathcart Wason and others, that that on Mr. Bamford Slack's was hardly begun when it was adjourned. It was resumed on June 2, but only two Members took part in the discussion, and it was "talked out" by one of these—Sir F. Banbury—who said, among other things, that he could not conceive of women taking part in public meetings, a thing which, as we have seen, they had been doing with ever increasing vigour since 1868 (*Hansard*, Col. 218 *et seq.*, Vol. 146. Col. 613 *et seq.*, Vol. 147).

### First Meeting of Protest

Meanwhile, the first protest meeting had been held. On the day that the debate stood adjourned, some of the women, who had been eagerly awaiting the result of the discussion, became exasperated at the way in which their question was treated, and, led by Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Wolstenholm-Elmy, they attempted to hold a meeting at the doors of the House itself. They were driven by the police as far as Broad Sanctuary, but beyond taking the names of the leaders no further notice was taken.

It was at this period that the Women's Liberal Federation reaffirmed a Resolution it had passed in 1902, pledging itself not to send its official organizers to help any Liberal candidates who were opposed to Women's Suffrage.

Women were beginning to assert themselves.

### **Formation of the Women's Social and Political Union**

At the time of the first meeting of protest, the Women's Social and Political Union had been in existence a little over a year, having been founded in Manchester by Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughters in October, 1903, its motto being, "Deeds, not words." The efforts of members were at first directed to securing the co-operation of various Labour organizations, but this work became increasingly difficult as it became evident that another General Election would occur, for the efforts of those within the ranks of the Labour party became more and more concentrated on their own propaganda. Independent action, and this of a startlingly unconventional type, was therefore undertaken.

### **Sir Edward Grey's Meeting at Manchester**

On October 15, 1905, Sir Edward Grey went to Manchester to address a great meeting in the Free Trade Hall of that city. On this occasion two girls, Miss Christabel Pankhurst and Miss Annie Kenney, persisted in putting the question as to what the Liberal party would do with regard to the emancipation of women, if it should be returned to power. The scene which took place was described by eye witnesses as one dealing an irreparable blow to the cause of Women's Suffrage. It will be sufficient here to state that, for exercising the recognized right of men to put questions at a public meeting, these two girls were unceremoniously hustled from the hall, and for attempting to address the crowds outside, they were arrested on a charge of obstruction, Miss Pankhurst being further charged with "assaulting" the police. The two were sub-

sequently sentenced to a short term of imprisonment, with the alternative of a fine, which alternative was declined. On their release, a great demonstration was held in their honour, in the same hall from which they had been ejected.

This was the beginning of "militancy."

### **Militancy**

The form of the question put by Miss Pankhurst and her companion to Sir Edward Grey, is worthy of attention. It was not the old formula: "Are you in favour of votes for women?" The new form of the question, and a very much more difficult one to answer, was, "What do you mean to do?" For then, as always, it could truthfully be urged that there was already a superfluity of business waiting to be dealt with, a contention which the Liberals, who had been for eleven years "in the wilderness," were particularly emphatic in asserting. In December, the long expected resignation of Mr. Balfour took place, and the country was plunged into the throes of a General Election. After that first experiment at Manchester, it was no uncommon thing for a woman to raise her voice at a public meeting to ask if the Woman's Question would receive attention at the hands of the Liberals, if they should be returned to power, but though no further arrests were made during the course of the election, the inquirer was usually thrown out of the meeting with abuse and violence, and not infrequently the meeting would break up in confusion.

At this election, members of the National Union endeavoured, as on previous occasions, to ascertain the views of Candidates on the subject. Nearly 500 Candidates in all expressed themselves as favourable to a measure of some kind, but some refused to reveal their views to any but constituents, thus admitting the truth of the contention that the possession of the vote is essential to those wishing to have their views considered.



The women textile workers put forward a Candidate of their own, Mr. Thorley Smith, at Wigan. He did not, however, secure election.

### Result of the General Election of 1906

The result of the General Election was that the Liberal party was returned to power by the overwhelming majority of 354, the chief positions in the Government being occupied as follows:

Premier	..	..	SIR HENRY CAMPBELL-BANNERMAN.
Chancellor of the Exchequer	..	..	MR. ASQUITH.
Secretary for Foreign Affairs	..	..	SIR EDWARD GREY. <sup>1</sup>
Home Secretary	..	..	MR. HERBERT GLADSTONE.
Secretary for War	..	..	MR. HALDANE. <sup>1</sup>
President of the Board of Trade	..	..	MR. LLOYD GEORGE. <sup>1</sup>
President of the Board of Education	..	..	MR. BIRRELL. <sup>1</sup>

MR. McKENNA and MR. WINSTON CHURCHILL occupied the positions of Financial Secretary to the Treasury, and Under-Secretary for the Colonies respectively.

### Summary of Parliamentary Activity. 1865-1905

1867. Mr. J. S. Mill's Amendment to the Reform Bill discussed.
1870. Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill passes Second Reading by a majority of 33. Is negatived in Committee.
1871. } Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill. Second Reading each year,  
 1872. } fails to secure majority.  
 1873. }
1875. } Mr. Forsyth's Bill fails to pass Second Reading.  
 1876. }
1877. Same Bill is talked out.
1878. Same Bill fails to pass Second Reading.
1879. Mr. Courtney's Resolution is negatived.
1883. Mr. Hugh Mason's Resolution is negatived.
1884. Mr. Woodall's Amendment to the Reform Bill is rejected.
1886. Mr. Woodall's Bill, adjourned from previous year, read a second time without division.

<sup>1</sup> Said to be "strong supporters."

1892. Second Reading of Sir Albert Rollit's Bill is rejected.  
1897. Second Reading of Mr. Faithfull Begg's Bill passed by a majority of 71.  
1904. Sir Charles McLaren's Resolution passed by majority of 114.  
1905. Second Reading of Mr. Bamford Slack's Bill is talked out.

Thus, in forty years, there were eighteen debates, three of which resulted in a favourable majority being recorded. Many other Bills got no further than the First Reading.



## THE DIGNITY OF THE FRANCHISE.

QUALIFIED VOTER. "AH, YOU MAY PAY RATES AN' TAXES, AN' YOU MAY 'AVE RESPONSERBILITIES AN' ALL; BUT WHEN IT COMES TO VOTIN', YOU MUST LEAVE IT TO US MEN!"

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## PART II

### *THE INCEPTION OF MILITANCY: SENTENCES FOR OBSTRUCTION*

(JANUARY, 1906—JUNE, 1909)

#### **1906 : The New Spirit of Rebellion**

THIS, then, was the situation at the period we have now reached. After about forty years of peaceful agitation, those who were anxious for the reform in question to be brought to pass saw that they were apparently as far off as ever from the realization of their hopes. Some of them realized the futility of securing expressions of sympathy, or of working for this or that party in the hope that their reward would come later, or of waiting for this or that piece of legislation to be out of the way, before urging their own claims. It must be remembered that no reliance could be placed on the help of any one of the great political parties in the State, as had been the case with those seeking enfranchisement on the occasion of previous extensions of the franchise. Neither was any real support forthcoming from the Press. Moreover, women being for the most part economically dependent, it was not easy to see how the money could be found for the extensive campaign that the situation demanded.

The difficulties were indeed sufficient to discourage the most ardent supporters of the cause. Far from doing so, however, there was begotten in some women the determination to overcome all obstacles, and to depend on their own efforts rather than on the promises and expressions of sympathy which had

hitherto not been productive of any practical result. So henceforth, when urged to be patient, or told that the time was not ripe, they replied that they had waited too long already, and that the time was always ripe for doing justice, and they demanded assurances that the question should be dealt with forthwith. The vote was no longer begged for as a favour, but demanded as a right, and for the first time women began to fight for their own hand. They said in effect:

“ We belong to a new generation of women who have profited by the labour of those who have struggled for human liberty in the past. We are better equipped for the struggle which lies before us than the generation of women which is passing away without seeing the realization of its hopes, for we have had the advantage of the education which their foresight and energy provided for us. Our eyes are wide open to the evils which prevail under the present system of androcentric dominance. We decline to be governed against our will, and we will prove to you the utter impossibility of your doing any such thing. We shall snap our fingers at the lectures you may read us, we shall flout the penalties you may choose to inflict, and we shall incidentally make you look utterly ridiculous in your misguided efforts to coerce us. We will resist you to the death, if need be.”

This new spirit was not immediately expressed in one breath, so to speak. For it was only when the mild form of “ militancy ” which took the form of making speeches on inconvenient occasions, or of persisting in attempts to secure an interview with some member of the Government, had been met with methods of repression and coercion, that the flame of rebellion really blazed.

Whether or no the attitude which has been described was ethically justified, is a matter of opinion, as is also the question as to whether or no the adoption of the new methods advanced the cause which those employing them had at heart. But there can be no manner of doubt that it was in this spirit

that the militants entered on the scene, and that to it is due the surprising events which took place during the years 1906-1914. It therefore seems best to give the keynote to the situation at the outset, leaving it to the reader to judge of the conduct of the fight between the two opposed parties, the fairness or otherwise of the methods employed, and the success attending the efforts of either side.

The prime mover in the campaign was Miss Christabel Pankhurst, then a young woman of six and twenty. The story of the early days of the society founded by herself and her mother has been already told several times, and likewise biographical details of the most prominent members of the society are plentiful. Here it must suffice to relate the part the society came to play in the history of the movement whose cause it had espoused.

It will be remembered that two possible means of agitating for the vote on conventional lines, namely petitions and meetings, had been tried for many years past, and with but indifferent success. A reference to the summary which was given in the last chapter will show what efforts continued to be made during the years 1906-1914 in the former respect, while in subsequent pages will be found some account of the vast amount of energy expended by Suffragists of every shade of opinion, in the purely constitutional work of organizing meetings all over the country. At the period we have reached, one other means of arousing interest had not as yet been tried. This was the organization of processions.

After her imprisonment in Manchester, Annie Kenney did not return to work in the cotton mill where she had been employed from the early age of ten, but threw in her lot with the founders of the W.S.P.U., and early in the year 1906, having been appointed to organize work in London, she set forth to accomplish this mission with the sum of two pounds in her pocket. The first thing she and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, then an art student in London, undertook to do, was to organize

a procession on the occasion of the opening of Parliament on February 19. Mrs. Drummond, known in after years as "the General," also became one of the little band of workers, whose resources at the time were by no means commensurate with their ambitious schemes, for it is recorded that she found herself obliged to borrow the wherewithal for her journey. A demonstration in Trafalgar Square being found to be impracticable, it was decided to finish up with an indoor meeting at the Caxton Hall, a sympathizer having been found who was willing to guarantee the rent.

### First Procession

So the arrangements went forward, and on the appointed day between three and four hundred women assembled at St. James's Park District Railway Station, and made their way to Caxton Hall, the scene of many subsequent gatherings of a similar nature. The police offered no obstruction, and contented themselves with insisting that the banners which many of the processionists carried should be furled. Yet it needed some courage to risk the possible opposition of the police, and the certain derision of the crowd of spectators, who assembled to witness this novel sight.

The hall was crowded, and the meeting most enthusiastic, and when in the course of the proceedings news was received that there was no mention of the subject of Women's Suffrage in the King's Speech, Mrs. Pankhurst arose and moved a Resolution that a deputation should at once proceed to the House to urge Members to introduce a Suffrage measure. This was carried with acclamation, and the whole meeting streamed out into the street, and made its way to the Strangers' Entrance. Orders had been given that no women were to be admitted, but as they waited about in the drenching rain, and refused to go away, they were eventually received in batches of twenty. The interviews thus obtained with individual Members were not, however, productive of any definite result.



### Sir Charles Dilke's Bill

A few days later, Sir Charles Dilke having reintroduced his Adult Suffrage Bill, a debate actually took place on March 2, when it came up for Second Reading, in spite of the cries of "No time!" which arose. In introducing his Bill, Sir Charles Dilke spoke of the great change which had taken place in public opinion of recent years, and referred to the example of Australia and New Zealand (in which countries women had been enfranchised by successive stages from the year 1893 onwards). He was opposed by Lord Robert Cecil, who, however, proclaimed himself a supporter of the enfranchisement of women to a limited extent. The discussion lasted about half an hour, and the Bill was talked out by Mr. (now Sir) Samuel Evans (*Hansard*, Col. 1,448 *et seq.*, Vol. 152).

### Deputation to the Premier

A few days after this event—that is, on March 9—a deputation waited on the Premier at his official residence, 10, Downing Street, and three of their number were arrested for persisting in their efforts to see him, Mrs. Drummond being one of them. After being detained for about half an hour, they were released on the "personal intervention of the Prime Minister," as was subsequently stated in the House, when a question was asked on the subject. Possibly it was hoped that an hour's experience of the interior of a police cell would be sufficient to quell the rebellious spirit which was beginning to be manifested. If such hopes existed, they were not, however, destined to be realized.

New methods also began to be applied to the "constitutional" side of the work, and this is how Mrs. Pankhurst describes the open-air campaign inaugurated about this time: "We adopted Salvation Army methods, and went out into the highways and byways after converts. We threw away all conventional notions of what was 'ladylike' and 'good

form,' and we applied to our methods the one test question, 'Will it help?' Just as the Booths took religion to the street crowds, so we took suffrage to the general public."

### Mr. Keir Hardie's Resolution

The question itself began to absorb more time and attention in Parliament. On April 25 the following motion was introduced by Mr. Keir Hardie, and seconded by Mr. Eugene Wason: "That in the opinion of this House it is desirable that sex should cease to be a bar to the exercise of the Parliamentary franchise." This motion was greeted with cries of "Agreed!" but in spite of this agreement, where the expression of opinion was concerned, a debate took place. A Resolution or motion has of course no legislative value, nevertheless the occasion was one of some importance, since the voting would have shown the feeling of the House, and if a substantial majority could have been secured, the women's claim that the Government should deal with the subject would have been greatly strengthened. Mr. Herbert Gladstone, speaking on behalf of the Government, announced that the question would be left an open one as far as it was concerned, and that he himself would give a vote in favour of the Resolution. A few minutes before the time for closing the debate, Mr. Samuel Evans arose, with the evident intention, as it seemed to those eagerly awaiting the result from behind the grille of the Ladies' Gallery, of again talking the question out. He was in the midst of a statement to the effect that there was no agitation in the country similar to that which had taken place previous to the extensions of the franchise in 1832, 1867, and 1885, when he was interrupted by a disturbance in the Ladies' Gallery. By order of the Speaker, this was accordingly cleared, and the debate was shortly afterwards adjourned (*Hansard*, Cols. 1570-1587, Vol. 155).

This somewhat meagre account of what took place may happily be supplemented from another source. Turning

the pages of the diary of Toby, M.P., we find that the Serjeant-at-Arms, hastily "whetting his sword on leg of chair, sent up message that if this was repeated, steps would be taken," and that Mr. Evans, in the "enforced absence of the traditional proprietress," had the last word.

This incident naturally provoked much criticism; but in an article published by Mr. Stead in the *Review of Reviews*, the writer spoke of the "divine impatience" of the Suffragettes, and maintained that their behaviour was by no means so unwomanly as it was "unmanly to allow a cause admittedly just to be stifled without a single indignant protest."

### **The Premier receives a Deputation**

Meanwhile, efforts had been made to induce the Premier to receive a deputation of representative women, who would state the case of those whom they represented, and a memorial had also been sent to him, with the signatures of nearly two hundred M.P.s, representing every political party, asking him to receive a deputation of M.P.s on the subject. May 19 was the date eventually fixed, and it was arranged that those Members who were interested should be present, and hear what the women's representatives had to say. For the second time a procession was organized, which started from the Boadicea statue and made its way to the Foreign Office, where three hundred and fifty persons in all, representing some twenty-five organizations, were received. The organizations represented included, in addition to various Suffrage Societies, the National Union of Women Workers, the Independent Labour Party, several associations of Liberal women, organized bodies of textile workers, besides associations of temperance workers, women graduates, nurses, and others.

The deputation was introduced by Sir Charles McLaren, and the first to speak was the venerable Miss Emily Davies, who had been one of the two ladies to hand the first petition to Mr. J. S. Mill in 1866 (that is, forty years previously), and



whose work in the educational field on behalf of her sex is too well known to need specific reference. She was followed by Mrs. Eva McLaren, Miss Margaret Ashton, and Mrs. Rolland Rainy, representing respectively 80,000, 99,000, and 14,000 women Liberals, who urged the claim which women had for consideration at the hands of a Liberal administration, pointed to the work women had done at elections, and referred to the Liberal precept that taxation should be accompanied by representation.

Miss Gore Booth, as the representative of various working women's societies, spoke with special knowledge of the conditions of those workers who were engaged in producing the wealth of the country, and whose number, she said, was then greater than double the population of Ireland. She pointed out that women earning 6s. to 7s. a week could not afford to wait, and urged that something should be done at once.

Mrs. Gasson, speaking for the Women's Co-operative Guild, with its 425 branches, and membership roll of over 22,000, said that within the Co-operative movement women had equal voting power with men, and that nevertheless the prosperity of the movement continually increased. When, however, it came to the consideration by Parliament of questions affecting the movement, the women realized their helplessness.

Mrs. Pankhurst, speaking on behalf of the W.S.P.U., reminded the Premier that a majority of every party had voted for the Resolution of the previous year, and urged the claims of the great body of dumb workers who were struggling for a livelihood in the great cities. She struck a new note with these words: "A growing number of us feel this question so deeply that we have made up our minds that we are prepared if necessary to sacrifice even life itself in getting it settled."

Other speakers were Mrs. Watson, representing the Scottish Christian Union of the British Women's Temperance Associa-



tion, with its 52,000 members, Mrs. Dickinson, who spoke of the great agitation in Lancashire among the factory hands (of whom she was one, having earned her own living since the age of eleven years), and Miss Mary Bateson, who spoke on behalf of University women engaged in professional work, such as teaching, doctoring, research work, etc.

In his reply, Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman congratulated the speakers on the way in which they had presented their case, and on the progress the question had made since he had been in Parliament. He assured his hearers of his sympathy with them, of his confidence in their fitness to exercise the privilege they were seeking, and of his belief in the justice of their cause. He went further, and said that they had made out before the country a "conclusive and irrefutable case," but added that he could do nothing to assist them in any way, as some of his colleagues in the Cabinet were opposed to the movement. He urged them to have patience, and to go on converting the country, as they had been doing during the last twelve years.

After the usual vote of thanks had been carried, Annie Kenney arose and exclaimed: "Sir, we are not satisfied, and the agitation will go on." The deputation then withdrew.

And the agitation went on. That same afternoon there was a demonstration in Trafalgar Square, this being the first big open-air meeting held in support of Woman's Suffrage that had taken place in London. Mrs. Pankhurst presided, and among the speakers were Mr. Keir Hardie, Miss Kenney, and that venerable worker in the movement, Mrs. Wolstenholme-Elmy.

### **Deputation to Mr. Asquith: "Suffragettes go to Gaol"**

As the Premier had told the deputation that the reason he could not do anything was that certain members of the Government were opposed to Woman's Suffrage, it was decided to bring pressure to bear on those known to be hostile, prominent

among whom was Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer. A request was therefore sent to him asking him to receive a deputation, to which he replied that he made a rule of not receiving any deputation on matters other than those connected with his official work. A further communication to the effect that women, being subject to taxation, were entitled to a hearing of their case, having elicited no reply, yet another was sent, announcing that a small deputation would call upon him at his house in Cavendish Square, on June 19. For persisting again two days later in the attempt to obtain the desired interview, Annie Kenney and three others were arrested and sentenced to six to eight weeks' imprisonment, in default of being bound over, they being of opinion that to consent to be bound over would have been an admission of wrong-doing, and an agreement to refrain from similar methods of agitation in future. In the case of Miss Billington, who received the longest sentence, namely, two months' imprisonment, the alternative was a fine, and this was paid by an anonymous reader of the *Daily Mirror*, though this solution had been declined the previous year by the Governor of Strangeways Gaol, when tendered under similar circumstances on behalf of Miss Pankhurst and Miss Kenney. The other three "Suffragettes" went to gaol, as the evening papers gleefully announced, and duly served their sentences. About the same time, four arrests were made in Manchester when Mr. Lloyd George and other prominent members of the Government spoke at a Liberal demonstration in that city, and were questioned by members of the W.S.P.U.

The word "Suffragette," which was coined about this time as a term of derision, was cheerfully adopted by those to whom it was applied, and from this time forward it came into common use, being employed to distinguish the "militants" from the "constitutionals," the word "Suffragist" being applied to the latter type from this time forward.

That the leaders of the movement fully realized all that

was involved in these overt acts of defiance, is borne out by an article which appeared in the Press at the time, written by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, from which the following extracts are taken:

"The struggle has begun. It is a life and death struggle. We women know that perfectly well. We are prepared for it, and for all that it means. The spirit of freedom is catching. . . . It is spreading fast. Eight women have already been sent to prison, one of these for the second time. Let the police, acting with the approval of the Liberal Government, bring about the arrest and imprisonment of every leader, one by one, as she becomes prominent in the women's agitation. Then the country will realize that there is no lack of leaders to take their empty place.

"For sixty years women have tried constitutional agitation—appeals to Governments and parties in the House, monster petitions, mass meetings, important and representative deputations—these have all been tried. They have failed. . . . For good or for evil the Women's Social and Political Union has turned to other methods.

"There is no going back. There can be no going back. We take this cause into our own hands. We look to none but ourselves. We appeal to none but women to rise up and fight by our side, shoulder to shoulder. . . .

"We are not afraid. We are not sorry for ourselves. On the contrary, we know that we have the very best thing that life has to offer—a fair fight in a great cause. . . . The harder the fight, the better. What we are going to get is a great revolt of the women of this country against their subjection of body and mind to men, and a realization of the equal dignity, authority, and power of their own womanhood" (*Evening News*, June 25, 1906).

### Second "Raid" on Parliament

On the occasion of the reopening of Parliament in October, a second "raid," as it was called, was made by members of the Union, twenty of whom were admitted to the Strangers' Lobby. The answer to a message conveyed to the Prime Minister by the chief Liberal Whip being an uncompromising refusal to do anything, a meeting of protest was held there and then in the lobby, and in the scrimmage with the police which occurred both inside and outside the House, ten women were arrested, among them being Mrs. Cobden Sanderson and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, the Honorary Treasurer of the Union. The following day they made their appearance at the police court, and in a very short space of time were sentenced to two months' imprisonment in the Second Division, no witnesses being called for the defence, and their friends being excluded from the Court.

For returning to the Court to protest against this treatment, or rather for carrying on her protest outside, when ejected from the Court, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst was also put under arrest, and sentenced to fourteen days in the Third Division.

In connection with this event, a letter from Mrs. Fawcett appeared in *The Times* of October 27, in which she pointed out that the responsibility for the sensational methods adopted lay with politicians, and in which she expressed the hope that the more old-fashioned Suffragists would stand by their comrades, who in her opinion had done more to bring the movement within the region of practical politics in twelve months, than she and her followers had been able to do in the same number of years.

Before the end of the year, twenty other women were arrested for similar offences, bringing the total number to forty-two of those who were sentenced to varying terms of imprisonment during the year, for the offence of insisting on making their voices heard, or of persisting in the face, shall



we say, of discouragement on the part of the police and others, in their efforts to do so. Offences of this description had indeed no precedent, and were generally described as "obstruction," in police court procedure.

It may here be observed that some years later—that is early in 1914—Mr. Nevinson, Mr. Laurence Housman, Mr. Harben, Mrs. D. A. Thomas, and others, were arrested under precisely similar circumstances, but on declining to be bound over, they were unconditionally discharged. There was clearly a miscarriage of justice in the one case or the other.

### Arrest and Imprisonment

What imprisonment meant in those early days of the militant movement, has been graphically told by more than one who underwent the ordeal, and by none more movingly than by Lady Constance Lytton, in her book, *Prisons and Prisoners*. Exigencies of space make it impossible to enter into any details here; a bare recapitulation of the usual course of events must suffice.

Following on the nervous strain which participation in the unconventional methods of the militant campaign entailed, involving as it did the loss of friends, the certainty of misunderstanding, possible suffering to others, and many other disadvantages too numerous to mention, came the event itself, and the physical exhaustion following on the encounter with the police. Then there would be long waits at the police stations, with all the uncertainty which the situation involved, and the endless formalities and delays, and humiliating incidents. Usually the prisoners were bailed out on the day of their arrest, to return the next day for a repetition of such experiences. Then their turn for being "tried" would come, and the effort would have to be made, often without success, to explain how they came to be in that situation, what had been their motives in doing what they had done, and so on. Then, after sentence had been pronounced, there would be

further detention in police cells, with all the attendant discomforts. Then the long jolting ride in *Black Maria*, and the arrival at Holloway, followed by further official inquiries. Then the medical examination, the weighing, the stripping—in semi-privacy—and changing into ill-fitting prison garb marked with the broad arrow. After all these experiences, the solitary cell, with its high barred window, its close atmosphere and meagre furniture, was to many of these “criminals” a positive haven of refuge.

The sentence had, however, still to be served. In some cases a few days’ detention was deemed sufficient, but in many the maximum sentence of two months’ imprisonment was imposed for the offence of “obstruction.” For the first month the prisoner was not allowed to send or receive a letter. She remained in solitary confinement for twenty-three hours out of the twenty-four, the only relief being afforded by exercise in the prison yard and attendance at chapel. At all times she was liable to be spied upon through the little hole in the door provided for that purpose, or to hear the rattle and jangle of keys in the door, followed by the entry of an official, whose business it was to make some announcement, or issue some command. The utter uncertainty as to what might occur at any moment has been described by many who went through the ordeal, as the most trying part of the situation, while the lack of ventilation, and the unusual sounds, etc., accounted for the sleeplessness from which they all suffered. Many, too, complained of a want of ordinary cleanliness. The conditions of course varied to some extent, according to whether the prisoner was sent to the Second or Third Division, or the hospital, and they were destined to be considerably modified both for the better and the worse as time went on. We are speaking now of the ordinary conditions of imprisonment in the early days of the militant agitation. Truly the alternatives of consenting to be bound over, or of paying a fine, must have been very alluring.

### Questions in the House

The treatment meted out to Suffragist prisoners did not pass unnoticed at the time. Many indeed were the questions asked in the House by those Members who felt that there was something wrong, when women of good position and irreproachable character faced the procedure of the Police Court and were subjected to the treatment accorded to drunkards and thieves. On one occasion (June 21), when questioned about the treatment of one of the prisoners, Mr. Gladstone, the Home Secretary, said he "trusted there would be no renewal of the disturbances," a remark which revealed how entirely those in authority underestimated the determination of those with whom they had to deal. So also did the repeated assurances that "the ladies could always enter into recognizances, and thereby secure immediate release," a course which, as we have seen, they themselves could not contemplate.

Urged to treat the offenders as first class misdemeanants, Mr. Gladstone said he was advised that he had no power to make any such order, but added that the magistrate had now directed that they should be so treated (*Hansard*, Col. 1110, Vol. 163).

Early in the following year, when Mr. Gladstone was speaking at Leicester, he was interrupted in his remarks by Miss Kenney, with questions about his administration at the Home Office. After she had been turned out, he said he regretted what had taken place, as in the case of Suffragettes he had intervened on their behalf. "My record of the incidents was taken," he said, "in the interests of those concerned, not only of the diminution of the sentences of the Court, but also in the amelioration of their treatment in prison" (*Leicester Daily Mercury*, Jan. 31, 1907).

In reply to a question on October 30, the Premier stated that he could see no connection between the disturbances which had occurred, and the question of the emancipation



of women, and added that it would be impossible to deal with so important a matter that session. A few days later, when Mr. Keir Hardie once more asked leave to introduce a Bill, Mr. Asquith said that "nothing had been said to the effect that the Government had declared that they would not deal with the question during that Parliament."

So it went on—delays, procrastination and prevarication on the one hand, protests and exhibitions of exasperation on the other.

In point of fact, of the ten women arrested on October 23, two were released in a few days on account of illness, and the rest were first of all transferred to the First Division and then, when half their sentence had been served, they were also released. Pressed to give a reason for this, Mr. Gladstone said that the Royal Prerogative had been exercised, and that it was not in accordance with constitutional practice for him to state the grounds of the advice he had tendered (*Hansard*, Col. 33, Vol. 166). The prisoners themselves and their friends were of opinion that they owed their freedom to the fact that at the Huddersfield by-election, which was then in progress, a leaflet had been distributed broadcast, telling the electors that the daughter of Richard Cobden and others were undergoing imprisonment as common criminals for the part they had taken in agitating for political freedom.

A dinner in honour of the released prisoners was given by the non-militant Suffragists at the Savoy Hotel, and a number of them immediately went off to relate their experiences at Huddersfield.

### Constitutional Work

Throughout the year propaganda work continued with increasing vigour. The National Union had redoubled its efforts to bring the question to the fore, and upwards of 1,200 meetings were addressed by leading organizers of the W.S.P.U. alone. These were attended by large numbers of persons, many of whom were doubtless attracted by the



novelty of the militant methods, and wished to see for themselves what manner of women they were who adopted them. It was calculated that at Hyde Park meetings the audience frequently amounted to 12,000.

By the end of the year the Union was firmly established in London, having secured permanent quarters at Clement's Inn. Mrs. Despard and Mrs. How Martyn were the first Honorary Secretaries, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence the Honorary Treasurer, and among the organizers were Miss Christabel Pankhurst, Miss Annie Kenney, and Mrs. Flora Drummond.

The objects of the Union were defined in the following terms:

"To secure for women the Parliamentary vote as it is or may be granted to men; to use the power thus obtained to establish equality of rights and opportunities between the sexes, and to promote the social and industrial well-being of the community."

The methods by which these objects were to be promoted were thus defined:

- (1) Action entirely independent of all political parties.
- (2) Opposition to whatever Government is in power until such time as the franchise is granted.
- (3) Participation in Parliamentary Elections in opposition to the Government Candidate, and independently of all other candidates.
- (4) Vigorous agitation upon lines justified by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned.
- (5) The organizing of women all over the country to enable them to give adequate expression to their desire for political freedom.
- (6) Education of public opinion by all the usual methods, such as public meetings, demonstrations, debates, distribution of literature, newspaper correspondence, and deputations to public representatives.

Membership of the Union was declared to be open to women

of all shades of political opinion who approved the objects and methods of the Union, and who were prepared to act independently of party.

These terms have been adhered to ever since, though, as will be apparent in due course, the interpretation of Number 4 has undergone some development in the course of the struggle.

By the end of the year the expenditure of the Union was, roughly, £100 per week, and nearly £3,000 had been received in voluntary subscriptions. The number of branches had increased during the year from 3 to 47.

### **Formation of a Suffrage Committee in the House**

The close of the year 1906 saw the formation in the House of a Suffrage Committee, the members of which pledged themselves, among other things, to take Parliamentary action on every possible occasion, and to urge other Members to ballot for the introduction of a Bill in the following session.

## **1907**

### **Welcomes to Released Prisoners**

Early in January, some of the Suffragettes who had spent their Christmas in prison were released, and a dinner of welcome was given them by Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence at the Holborn Restaurant. Shortly afterwards, another batch was entertained at breakfast at Anderton's Hotel, and thereafter these breakfasts of welcome became a regular institution when the gates of Holloway swung back to release their prey.

### **"The Mud March"**

Prior to the opening of Parliament on February 9, the older Suffrage Societies determined to make a demonstration, and therefore organized a procession which formed up in Hyde Park, and marched through rain and mud to Exeter Hall. This demonstration, the biggest of the kind that had

yet been seen, for between 3,000 and 4,000 persons took part in it, was afterwards referred to as the "Mud March."

The chief speakers at the meeting in Exeter Hall were Mr. Keir Hardie and Mr. Israel Zangwill. The latter made, as he said, his "maiden speech," as a politician, from which the following extracts may be quoted: "I declare I know nothing outside Swift or W. S. Gilbert to equal the present situation of Women's Suffrage. . . . The majority (of M.P.s) have promised to vote for Women's Suffrage. But *whom* have they promised? Women. And women have no votes. Therefore the M.P.s do not take them seriously. You see the vicious circle. In order for women to get votes, they must have votes already. And so the men will bemock and befool them from session to session. Who can wonder if, tired of these gay deceivers, they begin to take the law into their own hands? . . . 'Qui veut la fin, veut les moyens.' And undoubtedly the means are not the most ladylike. Ladylike means are all very well if you are dealing with gentlemen, but you are dealing with politicians. . . . For fifty years now woman has stood crying: 'I stand for justice. Answer—shall I have it?' And the answer has been a mocking 'No,' or a still more mocking 'Yes.' . . . To-day she cries, 'I *fight* for justice, and I answer that I *shall* have it.' "

### Convention of Women : Third "Raid"

Parliament reassembled on February 12, and there was no reference to the subject of emancipation of women in the King's Speech. A Convention of women assembled the next day at the Caxton Hall to consider the situation, and a Resolution expressing indignation at this omission, and calling upon the House of Commons to give precedence to a Women's Suffrage measure, was moved and carried with enthusiasm. When Mrs. Pankhurst, who presided, suggested that the Resolution should be carried to the Prime Minister by a deputation from the meeting, hundreds of women signified their willingness

to be of the number. Mrs. Despard, sister of Sir John (now Lord) French, well known for her eager espousal of all progressive movements, was chosen as the leader of the deputation, which immediately set forth. It found its passage barred by a strong force of police, many of whom were mounted, and much unnecessary force was used against the women. Fifteen of their number, however, succeeded in eluding the police, and in reaching the sacred precincts of the House, and one even penetrated as far as the inner lobby opening out of the chamber of debate itself. Rumours of what was occurring actually reached that apartment, and on the motion for adjournment, Mr. Claud Hay asked the Home Secretary why the police were employed in such large numbers to repel the Suffragettes. Mr. Gladstone, however, disclaimed all knowledge of what was occurring outside.

A large number of arrests were made, and the following day, at the Westminster Police Court, Mr. Curtis Bennett inflicted sentences, varying from 10s. or seven days to 40s. or one month, on fifty-six persons. The alternative of imprisonment was chosen in every case, and some of the delinquents were sent to the Second and some to the First Division, at the discretion of the magistrate, the reasons for the discrimination exercised not being revealed. Mr. Curtis Bennett told the offenders firmly that these disorderly scenes must be stopped, and was assured by Miss Christabel Pankhurst, who was one of those arrested, that there was only one way of doing so.

### **Mr. Dickinson's Bill**

The very next day, Mr. Dickinson reintroduced his Suffrage Bill, and the Second Reading was reached on Friday, March 8. The number of women which this Bill would have enfranchised, had it become law, was variously estimated to be between one and two millions. In introducing it, Mr. Dickinson said that he believed the principle involved was accepted



by the thinking people of this and of other countries. He referred to the fact that 34,000 men voters could not read the ballot papers they were entitled to sign, and averred that women would gladly submit to an educational test. He also referred to the example of other countries, and to the growth of the International movement, and expressed the hope that a revolution would not be necessary to bring the reform about.

The Premier, Mr. Campbell-Bannerman, speaking early in the debate, said the Government proposed to leave Members free to vote as they chose, and declared that he himself was in favour of the principle, but that he did not think that the Bill under consideration went far enough. The debate, though undoubtedly academic in character, was characterized by greater sincerity than had been the case in debates of recent years. Mr. Whitehead, who moved the rejection of the Bill, said the Government must make itself responsible for any such measure, and protested against women's powers of intuition and refinement being blunted and spoiled by being dragged down into political and party strife. He was supported by Mr. Bertram, who said that he did not believe that the bulk of the women of the country wished for the vote, but that if they did, he would be opposed just the same. Mr. Cremer, who also opposed, stated that he had been specially thanked for his opposition on previous occasions by Members who had not liked to "disappoint the ladies" who had interviewed them on the subject, by doing the same themselves. Mr. Rees, speaking towards the end of the debate, cracked jokes about the embarrassment which the possible future presence of ladies in the House might occasion, and by this means the Bill was talked out, the Speaker refusing to allow the Closure to be applied (*Hansard*, Col. 1102-1163, Vol. 170).

Needless to say, there were no unseemly interruptions from the Ladies' Gallery, as it was rigorously closed.

### **Second Convention of Women : Fourth "Raid"**

The reply came, however, in less than a fortnight, when another convention of women having assembled in the Caxton Hall, another deputation, led by Viscountess Harberton, set forth in yet another attempt to lay the grievances of women before the people's representatives. Similar scenes to those which had already taken place were once more enacted, with the result that the following day, another sixty-seven prisoners went to join those already in prison. They were placed in the First Division.

### **Sir Charles McLaren's Resolution**

A few days later, at a meeting of the Parliamentary Committee of Liberal Members, it was resolved to ballot for a Resolution dealing with the question, and Sir Charles McLaren, being successful in drawing the first place in the ballot, gave notice of his intention of submitting a motion for discussion. Thereupon Mr. (afterwards Sir) Maurice Levy gave notice of his intention of presenting an Adult Suffrage Bill. This proceeding effectually prevented the discussion in question, for by the rules of Parliament a Resolution is "out of order" if notice has been given of a Bill dealing with the same subject. A Resolution is thus effectually "blocked" (*see Hansard*, Col. 1525, Vol. 171). Such an abuse of a rule, which was originally intended to prevent a Member from unfairly *forestalling* the discussion of a matter which another Member had given notice of his intention of bringing forward, and which in practice had had precisely the opposite effect, was made impossible in the year 1914 (*Liberal Year-Book*, 1915, p. 94).

### **Activities of the National Union**

All this time the National Union had been particularly vigorous. Early in February it had organized a Conference of a large number of Societies, and the following day the "Mud March" had taken place. At the end of March, a

mass meeting had been held in the Queen's Hall, and now Mrs. Fawcett and four of her colleagues appealed to the Prime Minister to be allowed to plead their cause at the Bar of the House, giving historical precedents for such a course. Nevertheless, their request was refused, on the ground that there was no precedent.

Then, in May had taken place the Wimbledon contest, details of which will be found in the chapter on by-elections.

This Society also organized deputations to editors, with the object of doing something to break down the Press boycott.

### **"Women's Franchise"**

In June this periodical was started by Mr. Francis, of the Athenæum Press and "Men's League for Women's Suffrage," and for something over four years it did useful work in recording the activities of the last-named league, as well as of the National Union and of other Suffrage Societies.

### **Formation of Two "Militant" Societies**

Some differences of opinion arose in the course of the year 1907 among the members of the W.S.P.U., with the result that in September two distinct societies were in existence, the one, known later as the "Women's Freedom League," under the leadership of Mrs. Despard, and with a democratic constitution, the other retaining the name "Women's Social and Political Union," the members of which subscribed to the objects and methods set forth on p. 43, under the autocratic leadership of Mrs. Pankhurst. For a time both Societies used the latter name, and some confusion prevailed. It may be mentioned that the wording of the objects and methods of the Women's Freedom League is identical with that of the other society, already quoted. Suffragists thus had their choice between membership of the older "law abiding" society and two "militant" societies, both of these being openly in favour of "vigorous agitation upon lines justified

by the position of outlawry to which women are at present condemned," but while the one was organized on a "democratic" basis, the other was willing to leave the initiative and responsibility in the hands of its leader.

### **"Votes for Women" Paper**

This was the official organ of the Social and Political Union, and it was first issued by Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence as a monthly organ, with a halfpenny weekly supplement, in October, 1907. In the following May it began to appear weekly, and continued to do so until the great war had been in progress for over a year, when it again became a monthly publication. In October, 1912, it ceased to be the official organ of the W.S.P.U., being supplanted at this period by the *Suffragette*, as will be recorded in due course. In its pages may be found a complete record of the Suffrage movement in this country, from October, 1907, up to the present time.

A new departure was witnessed when this paper first appeared, for volunteers came forward to make it known in all manner of ways, and well-dressed women were to be seen standing in the gutter, with other itinerant vendors, and offering it to the passer-by.

### **Demonstrations in the Provinces**

In the autumn of the year 1907, several large demonstrations took place in the provinces. On October 5 a great procession of women was organized in Edinburgh, under the auspices of various Suffrage Societies, both militant and non-militant, and an overflow meeting was held in the Synod Hall. The Premier, who was in Edinburgh at the time, was asked to receive a deputation, but declined to do so. Later in the month, when speaking at Dunfermline, he said, in reply to a question addressed him by a woman in the audience, as to what methods he would suggest women



should adopt to gain their enfranchisement, "I think women ought to go on agitating, holding meetings, and pestering, as much as they can."

Great meetings also took place at Manchester, at one of which it was calculated that a crowd of 20,000 persons was present.

The policy of opposing the Government nominee at contested by-elections, which is fully explained in a succeeding chapter, was put into practice by the W.S.P.U. on nine occasions in the course of this year.

### **Heckling Cabinet Ministers**

The practice of attending public meetings, particularly those at which some prominent member of the Government was announced to speak, with the object of putting questions connected with the attitude of the Government with regard to the question, was also persisted in throughout the year. It is a delicate thing to distinguish between legitimate questions at question time, those interjected in the course of a speech, and those of a deliberately obstructive character, but it seems as if interruptions on the part of a Suffragist, male or female, were almost invariably regarded as belonging to the last category, for the authors met with vindictiveness and ill-usage at the hands of the speakers, stewards, and audience. Instances are on record of women being "ruthlessly thrown out" of a meeting (as Mr. Lloyd George expressly enjoined they should be at Cardiff, October, 1908), their arms pinioned to their sides, and of their being deliberately struck in the face by the clenched fist of some outraged Liberal as they passed. Their clothing was torn, their hats lost, and their hair all disarranged. In some cases, injuries of a more or less serious nature were sustained. Later in the struggle, when it became well-nigh impossible for a woman known to be a Suffragist to gain admission to a meeting of any importance, men sympathizers took up the cudgels on their behalf, and were

severely handled. Thus, at Bradford, in 1910, Mr. Hawkins had his leg broken. But this is an anticipation, and the most striking of the incidents connected with interruptions at public meetings will be referred to as they occur.

At this stage of the history of the conflict, attention may be directed to the fact that it cannot have been congenial work for any person to risk the misunderstanding, nervous strain, and almost certain ill usage which these protests involved. Whether it was good policy is a question of opinion, but that it was founded on a knowledge of what had proved effective when men were agitating for freedom, is borne out by the following letter from Dr. Cooper, then M.P. for Bermondsey, which appeared in the *Daily News* of November 21, 1907. In the course of this letter, he said: "It is within my recollection that in 1867, and also in 1884, very few public speakers who were opposed to the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to men, whether members of the Cabinet or otherwise, could utter a single word at a public meeting. Meetings were broken up, platforms were stormed, and their occupants had to escape the best way they could. In 1884 every Tory speaker used against the extension of the franchise the same arguments now used by some Liberal speakers and newspapers against the extension of the Parliamentary franchise to women. . . . Why should women be condemned for using the same weapons men found so useful when demanding the vote for themselves?"

The only answer would seem to be that men are men, and women are women.

## 1908

### Attempted Interviews with Cabinet Ministers

Early in the year 1908, indications were not wanting that the militants were not to be dissuaded from the course on which they had embarked, for some of them attempted to

obtain an interview with Cabinet Ministers, on the occasion of their meeting on the eve of the reopening of Parliament. The consequence was that Mrs. Drummond and four others were sentenced to three weeks' imprisonment in the Second Division.

Parliament reopened on January 29, and there being no mention of the subject of Women's Suffrage in the King's Speech, members of the Freedom League also organized deputations to Cabinet Ministers, to protest against this omission, and ten of their number were consequently sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from three to six weeks, in the Third Division. Several members of this League also attempted to present a petition to the King on the occasion of the opening of Parliament, but none of them were arrested

### **Mr. Asquith receives a Deputation**

The National Union too had been active, and on the following day, January 30, Mr. Asquith, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, received a deputation of members of that Society. On this occasion he clearly stated that he would require assurances that the majority of women wanted votes, and that the Government would not introduce a measure on its own account, nor would it hold out any hopes as to facilities for a Private Member's Bill. Members of the deputation, on leaving the Treasury, agreed that these remarks would serve to incite the Suffragettes to further militancy.

### **Earl Russell in the House of Lords**

Meanwhile, the treatment which some of the latter were undergoing in prison was calling forth many a protest from Members of both Houses. In the House of Lords, on February 5, Earl Russell made a long speech asking that they should be accorded First Division treatment, in the course of which he said:

"Is it desired that the agitation, however much your Lord-

ships may dislike it . . . should be stamped out by repressive measures, and by measures of hardship ? . . . The experience of history shows that measures of hardness, when applied to people who believe fervently in a cause, have the effect, not of stamping out the agitation, but of making martyrs of those who suffer them. . . . There grows an increasing feeling and a stronger movement among the very people whom you are seeking to repress. I submit that (such a course) is foolish, and likely to fail" (*Hansard*, Cols. 834-838, Vol. 183).

Earl Beauchamp, replying on behalf of the Government, gave the same kind of reply that Mr. Gladstone was constantly giving in the Commons—that is, one to the effect that the prisoners could at any time give "undertakings," and that the question as to whether they should be sent to the First or Second Division was a matter for the magistrate, who tried the case, to decide. Whether Earl Russell was accurate in his forecast, and whether his estimate of the situation was a just one, must be judged in the light of subsequent events. His remarks may be compared with a statement appearing in the Second Annual Report of the W.S.P.U., issued in March, 1908, which ran as follows:

"It will be for the Government to decide whether or not they will force the women of the country to take stronger militant action than they have already done. For our part, we shall not flinch from our duty. . . . The members of the Government, if they persist in their reactionary course of resistance to the just demand of women for constitutional rights, will find to their cost that they are fighting the strongest force in human life, the force of right and truth and justice."

It must be clearly pointed out that both these statements were made at a time when the wildest "militancy" that had yet taken place consisted in not taking "no" for an answer, but in persisting in the face of overwhelming resistance on the part of the police in the attempt to secure an audience with responsible rulers.



These tactics were indeed referred to by Mr. Haldane, when addressing a meeting of women Liberals in Glasgow on January 8, 1908, as "pin-pricks," a taunt which the Suffragettes were not slow to resent nor quick to forget.

### **Third Women's Convention : Fifth "Raid"**

The "stronger militant action" did not, however, take place till much later in the agitation, and during the year 1908 no less than four more attempts were made to carry a Resolution in person to the Prime Minister. Another Convention of women assembled at Caxton Hall on February 11, by which date it had become known that Mr. Stanger had secured an excellent place in the ballot, and that the Second Reading of his Bill would take place later in the month. Led by Miss Marie Naylor, a large body of women set forth from the Hall carrying a Resolution to the Prime Minister, urging the importance of the matter, and begging him to see to it that this Bill was not "talked out," as Mr. Dickinson's Bill of the previous year had been.

Earlier in the day an extraordinary scene had taken place in Parliament Square, when an innocuous looking furniture-van came to a standstill near St. Stephen's entrance, and, the doors suddenly flying open, some twenty to thirty women emerged, and forthwith attempted to storm the entrance. The leader succeeded in getting through the outer portal, but it is needless to say that she did not long remain there, and several arrests were promptly made. Before night, some fifty others had also been arrested in their efforts to reach the same destination, by less dramatic methods, among them being Miss Naylor, the leader of the deputation, the Misses Brackenbury (nieces of General Sir Henry Brackenbury), and Miss Maud Joachim (niece of the famous violinist). References in the Press to the Trojan horse were inevitable after this, and the Suffragettes were called upon to maintain the high standard of artifice which had been set up.

### At Westminster Police Court

That was, however, but one side of the picture. The following day, the old dreary procedure of the Police Court had to be faced, and Mr. Muskett, who prosecuted on behalf of the police, appealed to the magistrate, Mr. Horace Smith, to deal with the offenders with the utmost rigour the law permitted. Two of these were sentenced to a month's imprisonment in the Third Division, and the others to six weeks in the Second Division, in default of finding sureties to keep the peace for twelve months. That was not all, for Mr. Muskett issued a stern warning as to the penalties which future offenders would incur, saying that there was on the Statute Book an Act passed in the reign of Charles II., which limited the number of persons presenting a petition to the King, or to either House, to thirteen, and provided that penalties might be enforced for infringement of the Act, up to a fine of £100 and three months' imprisonment. A copy of his "Act against tumults and disorders" is given at the end of this part (p. 95), from which it will be seen that the number of persons was in point of fact limited to eleven, but that is a detail. Here appeared to be something to meet the situation which had been puzzling the authorities for so long, an Act of Parliament by means of which substantial penalties might be inflicted on women guilty of what, for lack of a better title, had hitherto gone by the name of "obstruction of the police in the execution of their duty."

### Sixth "Raid"

The challenge was immediately accepted by the Suffragettes. The Act in question belonged to the same period as the Conventicle Act and the Five Mile Act, the former of which made it illegal for persons to the number of more than five to assemble for religious services other than those prescribed by the Established Church, and the latter of which forbade a dissenting minister to come within five miles of a town.

Nevertheless, a trial under this Act, obsolete though it might be, would have demonstrated in an unmistakable manner that the movement was of a political character, and it was resolved to put the matter to the test at the earliest possible moment. Mrs. Pankhurst, who had been actively engaged at the South Leeds by-election, put in an appearance at the third and last sitting of the Convention at the Caxton Hall, on February 13, to give an account of what had taken place in that constituency, and to announce her intention of immediately leading another deputation to the House. Twelve women, including Miss Kenney and Mrs. Drummond, who were prepared to be arrested and tried under the Act, were chosen to accompany her. There was no trouble about the first part of this programme, as Mrs. Pankhurst and some of her companions were placed under arrest long before they reached the House, though they had carefully followed the directions of the police in every minute particular. When, however, it came to the trial the next day, it appeared that the authorities had changed their minds, and had decided to prefer the old charge of "obstruction," and evidence was also brought forward of helmets having been knocked off, and of the police have been furiously assaulted. Evidence in contradiction of these charges was disregarded, and the prisoners, thirteen in number, were ordered to find sureties, or to undergo, some six, and some eight, weeks' imprisonment in the Second Division.

### **Uneasiness in the House**

There seems to have been some uneasiness in the House at these proceedings, and a question was asked the same day by Sir William Bull as to the reason of Mrs. Pankhurst's arrest, which led to a discussion amounting almost to a debate. Mr. Gladstone, who entered the Chamber while it was in progress, said he had been in his room all the afternoon, and knew nothing of what had taken place. When Lord Robert Cecil explained, and quoted the cases of Mr. Ginnell (then in prison)

Mr. Stead, and Mr. Burns, in support of the demand that the prisoners should at least be accorded First Division treatment, Mr. Gladstone restated his points that the prisoners could always give sureties, that the lenient treatment he had been instrumental in securing had been abused, and that the question of Division must be left to the magistrate (*Hansard*, Col. 285, Vol. 184).

This was the first of Mrs. Pankhurst's imprisonments, and it was followed by thirteen others, from eleven of which she was released in a critical condition.

A few days after the events just recorded—that is, on February 17—Mr. Byles asked the Prime Minister if he could make a statement of the Government's intentions, "in view of the growing excitement and unseemly disturbances," to which the reply made by Mr. Asquith on behalf of his chief was: "No, sir, I understand that my right hon. friend has no expectation that any statement which he might make would be attended by the favourable results foreshadowed by my hon. friend" (*Hansard*, Col. 459, Vol. 184).

### **Second Reading of Mr. Stanger's Bill**

Mr. Stanger's Bill passed its First Reading without a debate on February 3, and a few days before it came up for a Second Reading Mr. Clough asked the Prime Minister if the five o'clock rule could be suspended on this occasion, and the reply was a curt "No, sir." So the chances were that the Bill would share the same fate on Friday, February 28, that had befallen Mr. Dickinson's of the previous year. A division was, however, reached, and there voted: For the Bill, 271, Against the Bill, 92. Majority in favour, 179.

Mr. Stanger, in introducing the Bill, said that it was similar to Mr. Dickinson's, and that its aim was identical with Mr. Keir Hardie's Resolution of 1906. While expressing disapproval of the militant movement, he questioned if it was any worse than cattle-driving. He was seconded by Mr.



Acland, who said that the Bill was against his personal interests, and who urged the advisability of discussing a practical proposal, instead of general principles. The rejection of the measure was moved by Mr. Cathcart Wason and seconded by Mr. Mallet, the most important contribution to the debate being made by Mr. Gladstone, the Home Secretary, who stated that the Government had decided to leave the question open, and made it clear that he was enunciating his personal views in the following statement: "Experience shows that the predominance of argument alone—and I believe that has been abundantly obtained—is not enough to win the political day. . . . There comes a time when political dynamics are far more important than political argument. . . . I hope that this debate . . . will do something to show that so far as argument is concerned, the day has been won for the advocates of the proposal." That words such as these would inevitably be taken by the enthusiasts for the reform as a challenge, was pointed out by Mr. Pease, who observed, *à propos* of militant methods, that if they were to be a bar to the enfranchisement of women, by the same reasoning, all men ought to be disfranchised if 1,000 male criminals could be found. Mr. Fletcher contended that the question had been settled years ago, when the Municipal franchise had been granted, and related that Mr. Seddon, the Premier of New Zealand, had told him that ten years after the vote had been granted to the women of New Zealand, there was not a man to be found who wanted to withdraw the privilege. Sir Maurice Levy, in opposing, urged that the Bill was not far-reaching enough—in his opinion all should have the vote, or none. Colonel Lockwood, who also opposed, complained that Mr. Stanger's speech had been too ethical, and others too humorous. Ethics and sentiment should be left alone, and after all, why should women be placed on an equality with men? Mr. Kettle was of opinion that the intrusion of women into the House could hardly depress its

intellectual level, and as to Scripture (which one of the previous speakers had averred contained no warrant for such an innovation), well, it had nothing to say as to the relative merits of Free Trade and Protection !

Mr. Clement Edwards, speaking as an Adult Suffragist, referred nevertheless to the "great revolutionary change" which the Bill would effect, and treated the question humorously. He spoke, for instance, of the "furniture-vanguard" of the movement, and, referring to the Members for North St. Pancras and North Kensington (Mr. Dickinson and Mr. Stanger), remarked that it was a matter of history that the Wise Men did not come from the North ! Mr. Snowden's serious contribution to the debate was a contrast to this kind of thing. He reminded the House that that was the twenty-third debate that had taken place on the question since John Stuart Mill had moved his amendment in 1867, that a Women's Enfranchisement Bill had passed its Second Reading as much as thirty-eight years previously, and that twelve months previously the Liberal Federation or Council had, by a majority of seventy-one to thirteen, asked the Government to take the matter up. He maintained that no question was more alive at the moment, but that the test, that a majority demanded it, was not one that had been applied with regard to other measures, notably the Education Bill and the Licensing Bill of that week. Referring to Mr. Mallett's statement that probably the membership of all Suffrage Societies did not exceed 300,000, he ventured to say that the number of men associated with all the Liberal organizations was no greater. In his own constituency, over 10,000 votes had been cast in his favour, but the organization of his party did not number 200. It was enough for him to know that a large number of women did desire emancipation. Sir R. Cremer quoted examples, furnished him by a legal friend, which in his estimation conclusively proved that as far as the law was concerned women were the favoured sex. He spoke with pride of having

been one of the six to organize the demolition of the Hyde Park railings in 1867, and expressed the desire that women should show similar proof of their earnestness.

After a few more short speeches, Mr. Rees, who, it will be remembered, had talked out Mr. Dickinson's Bill the preceding year, endeavoured to do so on this occasion by observations such as the following: "Woman is a good thing, and Suffrage is a good thing, but it does not follow that Woman's Suffrage is a good thing. Petticoat is a good thing, and government is a good thing, but it does not follow that Petticoat Government is a good thing." (Laughter and cheers.) Mr. Stanger, however, arose, and claimed to move that the question be put. This was not opposed by the Speaker, and the result of the division was that a larger majority was recorded for the Bill than on any other occasion before or since. As arranged it was referred to a Committee of the whole House, with the result that like many other Bills on the same subject, nothing more was heard of it (*Hansard*, Col. 212 *et seq.*, Vol. 185). During the debate, members of the Freedom League took part in a "peaceful rally" outside the House.

### First Albert Hall Meeting

For a time there was a lull in militancy, the Suffragettes having many other matters on which to expend their energies. On March 19, the first great rally of the forces of the W.S.P.U. at the Albert Hall took place, when special interest was added to the proceedings by the unexpected appearance of Mrs. Pankhurst on the platform, she having been released that afternoon, a few days before the expiration of her sentence. Possibly it was thought that this one experience of imprisonment, or the clemency displayed by its premature termination, would cure her of any inclination to return thither. Her daughter announced to the meeting that the reason was "not unconnected with Peckham." Vigorous speeches were made

by the leaders that night, and the audience responded with enthusiasm, the resolution calling upon the Government to carry into law the Bill then before Parliament, being carried with one dissident. The collection that night amounted to £7,000, including two contributions of £1,000 each. For a parallel to the scenes witnessed on this and similar occasions in succeeding years, one must turn to the time of Savonarola, for women brought gifts of lace, jewellery, and other articles of value, and literally cast them, as well as money, into the treasury.

### **Mr. Asquith becomes Prime Minister**

In April, 1908, Mr. Asquith became Premier, in succession to Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who had been in failing health for some time. The first result was a shuffling in Government posts, which necessitated various by-elections. The part which suffragists played in these fights is recorded in Part III. Mr. Churchill's contest at North-West Manchester is of special interest.

On May 20 a deputation of sixty Liberal Members was received by the new Prime Minister, whose object was to ask for facilities for Mr. Stanger's Bill. Mr. Stanger himself introduced the deputation, and Mr. Eugene Wason spoke on behalf of the Scottish Members. In reply Mr. Asquith stated that he regarded it as a duty of the Government to introduce an effective scheme of electoral reform, which should do away with the artificialities of the existing state of the law, its unreasoning delays in obtaining the qualifications for the franchise, its indefensible classification of the categories of voters, and above all, the power of double voting. Such a scheme, he said, should be wide enough to admit of an amendment dealing with Woman's Suffrage, and he further expressed the opinion that such an amendment would not be resisted by the Government, as two-thirds of his colleagues were in favour of the principle. He added that the proposed change must be







## KING COPHETUA AND THE BEGGAR-MAID.

THE KING (MR. ASQUITH). "THIS BEGGAR-MAID SHALL BE MY QUEEN"—THAT IS, IF THERE'S A GENERAL FEELING IN THE COUNTRY TO THAT EFFECT."

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on democratic lines, and must have behind it the overwhelming support of the women of the country, no less than the support of men (*Times*, May 21, 1908).

Miss Pankhurst immediately announced through the Press that this pronouncement confirmed the W.S.P.U. in its determination to fight against the Government. She pointed out that Mr. Asquith had given no definition of the term "democratic," and that, being himself an avowed anti-Suffragist, it was open to him to object to any and every amendment, unless it was of so broad a nature that it stood very little, if any, chance of being passed by a free vote in the Commons, and would inevitably be thrown out in the Lords. Again, Mr. Asquith had not indicated how the "overwhelming support" of the women of the country should be expressed, and he had consistently ignored all evidence, such as petitions, resolutions, demonstrations, and willingness to suffer imprisonment, which up to that time had been brought to his notice. Moreover, as the Bill would deal with several highly controversial matters, if it was wrecked on one of these, as seemed more than likely, the women's claim to citizenship would again be indefinitely deferred.

A diametrically opposite view of the matter was taken by the Liberal Women's Conference, which met the next day. Lady Carlisle, who presided, said: "This is a great and glorious day of rejoicing. Our great Prime Minister—all honour to him—has opened a way to us by which we can enter into that inheritance from which we have been too long debarred." That Liberal women were not alone in this estimate of the situation is clear from various opinions expressed in the Press, among which are to be found the following: "A more mature and experienced leader than Miss Christabel Pankhurst would have understood that the pledge which Mr. Asquith has given is quite exceptionally definite and binding" (*Daily News*, May 22). "The Prime Minister's pledge amounts to this—that facilities shall be given to the

House of Commons, before the present Parliament comes to an end, to insert Woman Suffrage in a Government Bill. The Bill will assuredly pass the House" (*Daily Chronicle*) "The meaning of Mr. Asquith's pledge is plain. Woman Suffrage will be passed through the House of Commons before the present Government goes to the country" (*Star*).

### Stirling Burghs By-Election

A by-election was just taking place at Stirling Burghs, in consequence of the death of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, and the result of the poll provided one of the few instances in which the Liberal was returned by an increased majority. This was in striking contrast to the results at the previous thirteen by-elections of this year, seven of which had followed on Mr. Asquith's elevation to the Premiership. The utmost was made of Mr. Asquith's "pledge" in the Scottish Liberal Press, and on the eve of the poll, the *Dundee Advertiser* and other papers published posters bearing the legend, "Premier's Great Reform Bill. Votes for Women." (See p. 108.)

In the House, Mr. Asquith was subjected to searching inquiries by friends and foes alike. Asked by Mr. Herbert on May 26 if the Government adhered to the principle that no such revolutionary change as conferring the franchise on women would be made until the matter had been submitted to the electorate, Mr. Asquith replied, that so far as he was aware, no declaration had been made. Asked by Mr. Hutton the same day what would happen if the amendment were carried, he said: "My hon. friend asks me a contingent question with regard to a remote and speculative future." In reply to other questions, Mr. Asquith referred his interlocutors to his reply to Mr. Stanger's deputation.



### Two Great Processions

At this stage of the struggle, efforts were made to demonstrate the support the movement had, by organizing two great processions in the Metropolis. These took place within a week of one another, one being organized by the National Union on Saturday, June 13, the other by the W.S.P.U. on Sunday, June 21.

The picturesque and striking pageant which took place on the Saturday opened a new phase in the history of the movement. About 13,000 Suffragists, members of various Societies, assembled on the Embankment and marched to the Albert Hall. Many well-known women were to be seen, including Miss Emily Davies, Dr. Garrett Anderson, Mrs. Fawcett, Dr. Anna Shaw (from America), Mrs. Ayrton, Miss Elisabeth Robins, Miss Beatrice Harraden, and others too numerous to mention. There was a contingent of women graduates, in picturesque academic costume, among whom were many well-known medical women; another of nurses in uniform; there was an International contingent, representative of many countries; there were popular actresses and famous women artists, while gardeners, pharmacists, gymnasts, stenographers, shop assistants, factory-workers, domestic servants—in fact women of every social grade, and representative of every activity open to women—were also to be seen.

Many gorgeous banners were carried, also innumerable bannerettes of every shape and hue. Some of the banners bore simple devices, others recorded deeds of heroism done by women, or referred to the achievements of women whose names have become household words. In a word, the procession was a great success, whether viewed from the point of view of size, of artistic merit, or of its representative character. Practically every newspaper spoke appreciatively of its beauty and dignity. A mass meeting in the Albert Hall terminated the day's proceedings.

Great as was this demonstration, that which took place a week later far excelled it in point of numbers. It had been advertised in every possible way, and by means of a steam launch and megaphone, Members and their friends on the Terrace of the House had been apprised of the coming event. When the day arrived, seven great processions assembled in different parts of London, and at a given time, all converged on Hyde Park, where a huge multitude of people was already assembled. Some idea of the magnitude of the affair may be gathered from the fact that contingents were sent from seventy provincial centres, which in many cases were conveyed to London by special trains. In the Park, twenty platforms were erected, from which speeches were delivered to as many persons as could get within earshot, and at a given signal, a Resolution calling upon the Government to enfranchise women without delay, was put simultaneously from these twenty platforms. In some cases this was carried unanimously, in others with a few dissentients, and doubtless there was a considerable proportion of holiday-makers, who had just come to stare and be amused on that beautiful June afternoon. This was the first occasion on which the purple, white and green were adopted as the colours of the Union.

Next day the papers were full of the demonstration, and even *The Times* let itself go in a highly eulogistic article, in the course of which these words occurred: "Its organizers had counted on an audience of 250,000. That expectation was certainly fulfilled, and probably it was doubled, and it would be difficult to contradict anyone who asserted that it was trebled. Like the distances and number of the stars, the facts were beyond the threshold of perception." *The Times* also devoted a leading article to the subject, admitting that no such meeting had been held for the last twenty-five years, and paying a tribute to the "wonderful skill in organization displayed by those responsible for this remarkable demonstration." By way of comparison, it may be mentioned

that it is generally computed that about 70,000 persons attended the demonstration in Hyde Park in 1867.

A copy of the Resolution was immediately dispatched to the Prime Minister, asking what action the Government proposed taking in response to the demand it contained. The reply was that the Prime Minister had "nothing to add" to the statement made to Mr. Stanger's deputation in May.

#### **Fourth Women's Convention : Seventh "Raid"**

Another Convention of women was accordingly summoned for June 30, and Mr. Asquith was notified that a deputation would wait upon him on that evening. Accordingly, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Miss Clemence Housman, and eight other women, sallied forth from the Caxton Hall to carry a Resolution in person to the Prime Minister. The deputation was met this time at the door of the Hall by Superintendent Wells, who escorted it to the House for the purpose of "facilitating its passage," as Mr. Gladstone afterwards explained in the House. He took the precaution to lock the doors of the Hall, thus imprisoning the body of women there assembled, and in addition various Press representatives, who sought in vain to make good their escape. The illegality of the proceeding and the possible dangers it involved hardly need indicating. At the door of the House, Inspector Scantlebury informed the deputation that he had instructions to prevent its further advance, and that the Premier had no reply to give to the letter which had been sent in advance, nor could he grant an interview. The deputation accordingly returned to the Caxton Hall for the evening session, while a crowd of some 100,000 persons assembled in the Square to await developments. According to Mr. Gladstone's statement in the House a few days later, an extra force of police, numbering 1,694, was employed on this occasion.

When, later in the evening, the women again sallied forth, they attempted to address the crowd, and scenes of violence



again took place, in the course of which many arrests were made. Two women, Mrs. Leigh and Miss New, were arrested for the unprecedented action of breaking windows at Mr. Asquith's residence in Downing Street. The following day they were sentenced to two months' imprisonment in the Third Division without the option of a fine, while the other defendants, twenty-five in all, received sentences varying from one to three months' imprisonment in the Second Division, in default of giving sureties.

These sentences were served during a period of intense heat, a circumstance which greatly aggravated the ordinary discomforts of imprisonment. The *Manchester Guardian* of July 10, in the course of a leading article remarked that it demanded considerable obtuseness to believe that the various hardships endured by the prisoners were for them the elements of comedy, and concluded with these words: "Because they are universally recognized to be suffering for an idea, their stringent imprisonment is indefensible. It violates the public conscience, and the law and the Courts cannot wage war on the public conscience without forfeiting respect and authority." The public conscience was, however, destined to be considerably further violated, and subsequent events will show to what extent the law and the Courts forfeited respect and authority.

### Putting back the Hands of the Clock

Critics of the militant tactics have often asked what good they have achieved by such means, and have declared that these have merely served the purpose of putting back the hands of the clock. That those who adopted these methods suffered out of all proportion to any harm they may have done, at this stage of the agitation at least, can hardly be denied by their bitterest opponents. But that the agitation was thereby weakened is obviously incorrect, as a glance at the summary of Parliamentary activity on p. 351 shows. Again,



the National Union, which continued to do active and persistent work on its own lines, undoubtedly received into its ranks many women who had been roused by the more sensational methods of the "militants," but who could not subscribe to these methods. In the year of which we are now speaking, the number of branches of this Union was four times as great as it had been in the year in which the National Union took that title—namely, 64—and by the year 1914 this number had still further increased to 460, with a total membership of 53,000. No figures are available as regards the membership of the W.S.P.U., but the increase in the number of subscribers is some indication of the growth of this Union. In the first year of its existence, the income was £2,705 2s. 10d., in the year during which the events just recorded took place, it was £20,232 19s. 1d., and in 1913, the last year for which figures are available, it was £36,535 15s.

Numerous other societies also grew up during the decade before the European war, some of which were for members of a particular profession, or religious denomination, some of which admitted both men and women, while others (five in all) were for men only. In the year 1913, there were in all over forty such societies, including six in Ireland, two in Scotland, one for Wales, while each of the three largest societies had ramifications all over the kingdom. No doubt there was a certain overlapping in membership of all these societies, but whatever the *raison d'être* of each society, however they might differ in matters of policy and methods, they were unanimous in their demand for the abolition of the sex barrier in the matter of voting for the election of those making the laws under which all had to live.

It is impossible to read the records of what occurred in this decade of which we are now speaking without coming to the conclusion that it was the militants *par excellence* who brought the question to the forefront among the political issues of the day. It must be reiterated that before they

adopted even the mildly militant methods recorded in the foregoing pages, every known constitutional means open to voteless women had been tried and had failed. Petitions, processions, deputations, resolutions, demonstrations, the exercise of indirect influence, had all alike proved useless in bringing about any practical result, and women wanted the vote, not expressions of confidence in their ability to use it wisely, nor vague promises of having it at some date in the "remote and speculative future." It would have been easy, finding the opposition what it was, to have refrained from urging their claims, and to have waited for a more convenient season, as they were frequently recommended to do. But this would have been an admission of failure which they were not prepared to make, and in point of fact did not make. So the unequal fight went on, between all the forces of law and order, precedent, convention, and authority, on the one hand, and women fighting for their freedom on the other.

### Questions in the House

We must now return to the case of those early rebels whose worst acts of defiance had consisted in imparting velocity to stones in Downing Street.

Throughout July, until the rising of the House, Mr. Gladstone had to face a fusillade of questions regarding the treatment meted out to the Suffragettes in Holloway. He was repeatedly asked how it was that he had been able to procure First Division treatment for them in 1906 and 1907, and why they could not receive the same kind of treatment as had been afforded to Jameson. Mr. Swift MacNeill was indefatigable in drawing attention to the indignities they suffered, such as the wearing of clothes which had been worn by ordinary prisoners without being washed, the necessity of changing all their clothes in the presence of wardresses and other prisoners, the solitary confinement for twenty-three out of the twenty-four hours, and many other things. Even Anti-Suffragists,

like Mr. Cathcart Wason, joined in the chorus of disapproval. Mr. Gladstone argued that the question of Division was one for the magistrate who tried the case to decide, and alternatively that "the ladies could at any time secure their release by giving sureties." The Speaker was more definite, and said (July 30), "These ladies are imprisoned by their own choice."

Earl Russell also took up the cudgels in the Lords. All was, however, in vain, and the law was duly vindicated, though in some minor respects there was some amelioration of prison conditions.

### Meetings in the Provinces

During the summer of 1908 several great gatherings took place in the provinces, similar in character, though necessarily on a smaller scale, than that which took place in Hyde Park in June. It was estimated by the *Daily Dispatch* that a crowd numbering over 100,000 persons assembled at Heaton Park, Manchester, in July, when speeches were made from thirteen platforms; and a similar demonstration was held a few days later on Woodhouse Moor, Leeds, while at Nottingham Forest, the Bristol Downs, and many other places great crowds assembled to hear the leaders of the militant movement set forth their case. Numerous indoor meetings were also held in the chief provincial centres, including Manchester, Bristol, Birmingham, Leeds, Bradford, Liverpool, Glasgow, and Edinburgh. In London, the weekly at-homes having outgrown the Portman Rooms, the large Queen's Hall was chartered in July, and here an audience of 1,000 on the average assembled week by week to hear of the latest developments in the situation. It was estimated that the W.S.P.U. alone was responsible at this period for about 10,000 meetings altogether in the course of the year. It cannot be said to have neglected the constitutional side of the work.

### **Demonstration in Trafalgar Square**

“Deeds, not words,” was, however, the motto of the Union, and in accordance with this precept a meeting was convened in Trafalgar Square for October 11, prior to the reopening of Parliament, when speeches were made by Mrs. Pankhurst, Miss Pankhurst and Mrs. Drummond, calling upon the public to assist them in “rushing” the House of Commons the following Tuesday, a handbill to the same effect being distributed broadcast. The next day (Monday) a summons was issued against the three leaders, ordering them to appear that afternoon at Bow Street to show cause why they should not be ordered to find sureties for their good behaviour, information having been laid that they had been guilty of conduct likely to provoke a breach of the peace. This document was coolly disregarded, and the three put in an appearance at the weekly meeting of the Union instead, where a message was received to the effect that the hearing of the summons had been adjourned till the following morning. To this the reply was that the three leaders were prepared to obey it at 6 p.m. and not before. A warrant for their arrest was issued, but the police were baffled in their efforts to find their quarry, until, punctually at the time mentioned, they made their appearance. The Court having by that time risen, and an application for bail being refused, the three were taken off to the police cells. In response to a telegram, Mr. Murray, Liberal Member for East Aberdeen, came to the rescue of the ladies, and sent them in a sumptuous feast, beds, and other comforts from the Savoy Hotel. The management threw themselves heartily into the enterprise, and ended by refusing to charge anything for what they provided.

### **Fifth Convention : Eighth “Raid”**

Meanwhile, led by Miss Wallace Dunlop (who the following year inaugurated the “hunger strike”), the eighth raid had duly taken place. Questioned a few days later in the House



as to the number of extra police employed on this occasion, Mr. Gladstone "did not think it advisable" to reveal it. That it was sufficient to repel the "raid" goes without saying, and that the instructions of the police were to make as few arrests as possible became clear, when it transpired that only twenty-four women and twelve men had been arrested, although the disturbance in and around Parliament Square had lasted until midnight. The most dramatic incident of a dramatic day occurred within the precincts of the House, when Mrs. Travers Simons, Mr. Keir Hardie's private secretary, succeeded in penetrating to the chamber of debate itself, while a discussion on the Children's Bill was in progress, and called upon the astonished Members to attend to the women's question. Needless to say, she was swiftly removed, but no proceedings were taken against her.

### **Trial of the Leaders and Others**

The next day, the trial of the leaders and of the other women took place at Bow Street. Miss Pankhurst conducted her own defence, and succeeded in eliciting from Inspector Wells the admission that though the proceedings were instituted by the Commissioner of Police, he should "suspect" that it was sometimes the case that the Government was the moving spirit in the matter. From Inspector Jarvis she drew the admission that she and the other two defendants had given no definite undertaking to obey the summons served upon them, as the prosecution had tried to prove. An application for an adjournment for a week was agreed to, and the three were released on bail.

The sentences on the other prisoners varied from three weeks' to three months' imprisonment, the latter sentence being imposed on Mrs. Leigh, as an old offender.

The trial, which was resumed on the 21st, was rendered noticeable by the appearance in the witness box of Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Gladstone, who were questioned by Miss

Pankhurst with the object of drawing attention to the political character of the agitation. Though constantly pulled up by the magistrate, Mr. Curtis Bennett, she succeeded in putting such questions as the following to Mr. Lloyd George: "Have you ever heard these words: 'I am sorry to say that if no instructions had ever been addressed in political crises to the people of this country, except to remember to hate violence, to love order, and to exercise patience, the liberties of this country would never have been attained'?" Mr. Lloyd George said he could not call them to mind, but expressed his willingness to accept Miss Pankhurst's statement that they had been used by Mr. W. E. Gladstone. To the Home Secretary Miss Pankhurst quoted passages from his speech in the House earlier in the year (see p. 59), and asked him if it was within his knowledge that she and her confederates were acting on his advice in the action they had taken. He assented to the proposition contained in the quotation from his distinguished father's speech, but declined to express an opinion with regard to the methods of the militants.

An important piece of evidence was furnished by another witness, Miss Brackenbury, who stated on oath, before the magistrate had time to disallow the question, that on a recent occasion Mr. Horace Smith had told her that in sentencing her he was carrying out the instructions he had received.

The proceedings were very protracted, lasting, with a short interval for lunch, from 10 a.m. till 7 p.m., at which hour the magistrate adjourned the case till the following Saturday, bail being again allowed.

On the third and last day of the trial (October 24) Mr. Bennett cut the proceedings short, refusing to allow any but a very few witnesses for the defence to be called; but the three prisoners were allowed to address the Court in their own defence. Miss Pankhurst, who did so first, protested emphatically against proceedings having been instituted in a police court at all, saying that if any charge had been made, it

should have been that of illegal assembly. She drew comparisons between their case and that of others who had done similar things—for instance, Mr. John Burns, who had been arrested, but acquitted, and was at that moment a member of the Government. Mrs. Pankhurst recapitulated the reasons that had brought her into the position in which she then stood, and referred to her public work as a Poor Law Guardian, Member of a School Board, and Registrar of births and deaths, in the course of which she had come to realize that before the law, the condition of her sex was so deplorable that she felt it to be her duty to break the law in order to call attention to her reasons for doing so. She pointed out that it was only after some thirty years of constitutional and "womanly" work that she had done so. She took upon herself full responsibility for the agitation in its existing stage, assured the magistrate, as her daughter had done, that they would on no account consent to be bound over, and that the agitation would go on whatever penalty he might impose. Mrs. Drummond stated that as a wife and mother, what she wanted was to see women looked upon as human beings in the eyes of the law. She herself had been twice to prison, and was prepared to go as many times as necessary. She assured the magistrate that nothing could stop the movement.

All this was, however, brushed aside by the magistrate, who said he was there for the purpose of endeavouring to carry out the law, and that the circulation of the handbill was undoubtedly calculated to lead to a breach of the peace. All three defendants were ordered to find sureties to keep the peace for twelve months, and in default to go to prison, the two elder defendants for three months, and the younger defendant for ten weeks.

### First Indication of Trouble in Holloway

On reaching prison, the first indication of subsequent trouble in Holloway was given when the three prisoners absolutely declined to strip in the presence of wardresses, or to be searched. They further claimed the right to speak to one another. The authorities immediately gave way on the first point, but remained obdurate with regard to the second, and when Mrs. Pankhurst nevertheless spoke to her daughter she was characterized as a "dangerous criminal," and ordered to remain in solitary confinement, with a wardress stationed at the door of her cell, until she would promise not to offend again. Orders, however, soon came from the Home Office that Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter should be allowed to walk and talk together for an hour daily. At the same period, the other prisoners, led by Miss Wallace Dunlop, mutinied as a protest against the treatment of one of their number, which they considered unjust. It was in this manner that was inaugurated the systematic disregard of prison rules and authority which was practised by the Suffragettes for some six years. It must be remembered that this did not take place until some hundreds of imprisonments, lasting over a period of two and a half years, had been served with the utmost patience and restraint. It should also be noticed that with the increasing severity of the sentences the offences became more and more serious in character, and the insubordination of the prisoners took on a more and more serious aspect. Who could have foreseen, at the period of which we are now speaking, the aspect which matters would have assumed in less than six years? Yet in that short period every possible method of coercion, with the exception of flogging, was tried, and every one failed of its object.



### Protests in the Press and in the House

To return to the sentences passed on Mrs. Pankhurst and her companions. A chorus of protest arose in the Press and in Parliament. Said the *Daily Chronicle* of October 26, "We wish that the magistrate had imposed shorter terms of imprisonment on the defendants, and had ordered them to be treated as first class misdemeanants. That concession would be heartily approved by public opinion, which, though it is sometimes exasperated by the methods of the militant women, would have them treated with the utmost leniency for any technical infractions of the law into which they may be betrayed by excess of zeal."

The *Daily News*, in commenting on the matter, observed: "For our part, we are of those who will welcome with deep relief the coming day when the reform for which the Suffragist leaders are contending will be made law. . . . No harm, to say the least of it, would be done by a definite assurance that no grounds exist for the suspicion, forcibly expressed in the course of the proceedings at Bow Street, that a particular line of action is being recommended from above to magistrates dealing with the Suffragist cases."

The *Daily Telegraph*, in the course of a long and weighty article, referred to the penalty inflicted as "ludicrously unfitted to the circumstances of the case, and in itself dishonourable as well as useless." It went on to say, "The methods of these women may be unlawful as well as irritating. . . . Nevertheless, the bare fact remains. Three able women have to go to prison because they want votes for their sex. . . . The time has come, in our opinion, when the whole case for Women's Suffrage ought to be considered in its length and breadth, as having definitely come within the sphere of practical politics. We can no more stop the hands on the clock of progress than we can prevent ourselves from getting old. . . . Votes for women . . . is a problem which has become gravely and sternly practical."

In the House, Mr. Gladstone had again to parry a host of questions addressed to him by the ever vigilant Mr. Swift MacNeill and many others, including even Mr. Rees. With regard to the stripping, Mr. Gladstone said that the "usual practice" had been "modified" (by what means we have already seen). He disclaimed all authority either as regards the action of the magistrate or of the police, though, as Mr. Keir Hardie pointed out on one occasion (October 13), the prosecutions had now been entered upon as Government prosecutions, and on another (November 4) that the magistrate had stated on Monday, November 2, that he, the Home Secretary, was the person to whom to apply for First Division treatment. (See *Evening News* of November 2 for report of Mr. Marsham's remarks.) Mr. Gladstone, however, continued to shield himself behind his subordinates, though on one occasion (November 18) he accepted full responsibility for the actions of the Metropolitan police. The most noticeable pronouncement was made by Lord Robert Cecil, in the course of a speech at the end of the Session, when the business of the House was under consideration. He said, with reference to the burning subject, that an enormous majority of the House being absolutely pledged to the principle of the Bill (Mr. Stanger's), that "to go on from year to year without taking any effective step to carry out that pledge was not consistent with the dignity and honour of the House." Mr. Asquith, in reply, said that he thought that the Bill had disappeared. He accepted the noble Lord's assurance that such was not the case; it had escaped his notice (*Hansard*, Col. 500, Vol. 198).

It may be mentioned that Mrs. Drummond was released at the end of nine days, on account of ill health, and that Mrs. Pankhurst was released with her daughter, on the expiration of the latter's sentence, a few days before Christmas.

### Another Albert Hall Meeting

Meanwhile, another great demonstration had taken place at the Albert Hall on October 29, the chair being taken by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, when a Resolution was passed warning the Government that coercion would only fire women to sterner opposition, and when the £50,000 fund was inaugurated by gifts and promises amounting to between £2,000 and £3,000.

### The Grille Scene

On October 28 a remarkable scene took place in the House, which is recorded in the following manner in the official record of that assembly. Mr. Remnant (Finsbury) was speaking on the Licensing Bill, but "the remainder of his speech was inaudible in the Press Gallery, on account of a disturbance in the Ladies' Gallery, where two ladies had chained themselves to the grille, and endeavoured to address the House in favour of Women's Suffrage. Eventually the ladies were removed." (*Hansard*, Col. 364, Vol. 195).

The disturbance in question was made by three members of the Freedom League, Miss Matters, Miss Fox, and Miss Tillard, two of whom were found by the amazed attendants to have chained themselves securely to the bars of the grille, about twenty square feet of which structure had to be removed, with the ladies attached thereto, to an adjoining Committee Room, where the medley was resolved into its component parts. A disturbance also occurred in the Strangers' Gallery, and yet another in the Lobby, where about 200 supporters of the Freedom League were gathered. On this occasion fourteen arrests were made, the offenders being sentenced to one month's imprisonment in the Third Division, but in response to a vigorous agitation the Home Secretary intervened, and the prisoners were removed to the Second Division.

The result of the disturbances in the chamber of debate was

that the Speaker "most reluctantly" gave orders that both galleries should be closed, and the matter was referred to a Special Committee, with what results will duly appear.

### **First Trial by Jury**

The first occasion on which a Suffragette was accorded a trial by jury was at Leeds, in November of the year which we are now considering. On October 10 Mr. Asquith had visited that city. From 7 a.m. onwards, cordons of police had been drawn up round the station at which he was to arrive, along the route he was to take, and round the Coliseum, at which he was to speak. Mrs. Baines succeeded in holding an open air meeting outside the building (from which Mr. Asquith made good his escape by a back door), but she was arrested, with four others, in attempting to make her way inside. The charge preferred against her was one of "unlawful assembly," and at the preliminary hearing the magistrate, remarking that she was a very difficult person to deal with, had admitted her to bail on her own recognizances. Subpœnas were served upon Mr. Asquith and Mr. Gladstone to give evidence at the trial, but these were set aside by the Divisional Court, Crown lawyers being employed by Mr. Asquith to defend his suit. Mrs. Baines was eventually tried on November 19 and 20, when she was defended by Mr. Pethick Lawrence. She was sentenced to six weeks' imprisonment, on refusing to be bound over.

### **Heckling of Cabinet Ministers**

Throughout the year, the appearance of a Minister at a public meeting was the signal for protests which in many cases led to grave disorders. On two occasions in particular this was the case. One of these was at a meeting at the City Temple, convened by the Liberation Society, and addressed by Mr. Birrell, on November 12. Mr. Birrell had previously



been interviewed in his constituency of North Bristol on the subject of Women's Enfranchisement, but had given very unsatisfactory replies, the most significant of which had been one to the effect that he would not support an Adult Suffrage measure. (It must be remembered that one of the "conditions" of Mr. Asquith's famous "pledge" was that any amendments to his proposed measure of Franchise Reform must be on a democratic basis, and here was one of his Ministry dissociating himself from a measure which fulfilled that condition.) Accordingly, members of the W.S.P.U. were present in great force to protest, and scenes of violence and brutality were witnessed, which, moreover, brought Mr. Birrell's speech to an abrupt conclusion.

The other occasion was that of Mr. Lloyd George's presence at the Albert Hall on December 5, when, by his own suggestion, he addressed a meeting of Liberal women on the subject of Votes for Women. It was anticipated that members of the W.S.P.U. would pursue their usual tactics, and the organizers of the meeting endeavoured to dissuade them from this course. The reply was that unless Mr. Lloyd George would undertake to give an assurance at the meeting that the Government was prepared to *do* something, the request could not be complied with. As a matter of fact, the speaker contented himself with assurances of his belief in the fitness of women to exercise the franchise, and with repeating Mr. Asquith's "pledge." Early in the proceedings, a body of women seated in the front row of the arena suddenly removed their cloaks, and disclosed the attire of Second Division prisoners, plentifully adorned with the broad arrow. When, at intervals, these and other women, including members of the Freedom League, arose to make a protest, or to interject a remark, the stewards fell upon them with the utmost ferocity, and pandemonium reigned. One woman defended herself with a dog whip against possible repetition of attempted indecent assault, but otherwise the interrupters were absolutely

at the mercy of the infuriated stewards, who used what the *Manchester Guardian* designated as "nauseating brutality" in the execution of their duties.

### The Public Meetings Act

The effect of these occurrences was twofold. The Suffragettes' own meetings were broken up, notably in the early days of the Chelmsford by-election, which took place shortly after the City Temple meeting, and within a very few days of the Albert Hall meeting, Lord Robert Cecil introduced his Public Meetings Bill, which provided for the infliction of a fine of £5 or imprisonment for one month on those convicted of "disorderly conduct at a meeting with the purpose of preventing the transaction of the meeting."

The passage of this Bill through all its stages was phenomenally quick, as the following summary of the proceedings will show.

- |          |     |   |
|----------|-----|---|
| December | 10. | First Reading, without a discussion.                                  |
| "        | 16. | Second Reading.   |
| "        | 17. | Committee stage, Report, and Third Reading.                           |
| "        | 18. | First and Second Reading, Committee stage, and Report in the Lords.   |
| "        | 19. | Third Reading in the Lords. Their Amendments accepted by the Commons. |
| "        | 21. | Royal Assent.   |

It may be mentioned that an Amendment to insert after the word "person" the words "of either sex," was opposed by the promoter of the Bill, on the ground that it was perfectly clear that the word "person" did include both men and women,<sup>1</sup> and that he did not think that such words could be found in any Act of Parliament. The Amendment was withdrawn.

An indication of the haste with which this Bill was rushed through all its stages is to be found in the fact that there

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 84, 92.

existed only three typed copies of the Amendments discussed by the Lords on the 18th. Nevertheless, at this sitting four Parliamentary stages were disposed of. The total amount of time devoted to the Bill in both Houses together, was about one and a half hours (*Hansard*, Vol. 198).

It may be observed that although this Bill is thus part of the legislative machinery of the country, as far as it has been possible to ascertain, it has been a dead letter, possibly because, as stated by Mr. McKenna in the House on May 1, 1913, the police had no power of arrest under the Act.

### **The Scottish Graduates' Appeal Case**

At the close of the year 1908, a case of appeal was heard before the Lords which aroused some interest in legal circles as well as among Suffragists. This was the case of "*Nairn v. University of St. Andrews*," the previous history of which is briefly as follows.

In the year 1889, women were, by the Universities (Scotland) Act, admitted as graduates of the Universities, and as such had automatically been registered as members of the Council of the University ever since the year 1892. Now, according to the Representation of the People (Scotland) Act of 1868, it was provided that "Every person whose name is, for the time being, on the Register . . . of the General Council of such University shall, if of full age and not subject to any legal incapacity, be entitled to vote in the election of a Member to serve in any future Parliament for such University in terms of this Act."

The first contested election for the Universities of St. Andrews and Edinburgh which took place after the admission of women to graduation occurred early in October, 1906, and five women graduates of Edinburgh brought an action in the Extra Division of the Court of Session in Scotland against the University Courts and the Chancellors, Vice-Chancellors, and Registrars of the Universities concerned, to make good

their claim to vote, their application for voting papers having been refused by the Registrars.

The case had come before the Lord Ordinary in July, 1906, when the chief points at issue were the construction to be put on the word "person," and on the expression "not subject to any legal incapacity." It was argued by the defendants that the word "person" was open to construction, and that in this case it clearly did not include women. If so, the expression "not subject to any legal incapacity" obviously could not have applied to them; but it was argued alternatively that women were legally incapacitated, by reason of their sex, from exercising the Parliamentary franchise, and this in spite of the fact that no statute could be found in which legal incapacity had this meaning.

The presiding Judge, in giving judgment against the ladies (who were further ordered to pay the costs), sought to console them by quoting the opinion of Judge Willes that their legal incapacity to exercise the right in question did not arise "from any under-rating of the sex, either in point of intellect or of worth," but was "an exemption founded on motives of decorum, and was a privilege of the sex." "The absence of such a right," he further said, "is referable to the fact that in this country in modern times, and chiefly out of respect to women, and a sense of decorum, they have been excused from taking any share in the department of public life."

These assurances did not satisfy the ladies, who appealed the following year (1907) to the Lords of the Extra Division, who confirmed the decision of the lower Court, on the ground that it was a principle of the "unwritten law of the country" that men only were entitled to exercise the Parliamentary franchise, and that the ambiguous word "person" must be construed in the light of that principle.<sup>1</sup> The point about "legal incapacity" was dismissed, as not having any material bearing on the question.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 82, 92.



Nothing daunted by the fact that they were again called upon to pay the costs, the indomitable quintette appealed to the House of Lords, before which tribunal, after many delays, the case was tried on November 10 and 12, 1908. It was conducted by one of the appellants, Miss Chrystal Macmillan, before the Lord Chancellor, Lord Ashbourne, Lord Robertson, and Lord Collins. It would be impossible within the limits of this volume even to summarize the arguments used, or the authorities cited. It must suffice to say that the Lord Chancellor gave it as his opinion that if the word "person" was wide enough to comprise women, then they were shut out by reason of their "legal incapacity," and that, if it was not wide enough, then there was nothing in any Act of Parliament that gave the smallest foothold for the appellant's contention; that Lord Ashbourne and Lord Robertson decided that women were not persons within the meaning of the Act in question, the latter adding that he did not consider the argument about legal incapacity to be otherwise than legitimate; that Lord Collins concurred, and that the appeal was dismissed with costs.

## 1909

### Arrests in Downing Street

Towards the end of the year 1908, and prior to the opening of Parliament in the following year, Mr. Asquith received a large number of deputations from various men's societies, but resolutely declined to see one representing the W.S.P.U. Accordingly, on the occasion of the meeting of the first Cabinet Council of the new Session, on January 25, 1909, members of that Union again presented themselves at 10, Downing Street, and persisted in their efforts to secure an interview. The police were summoned, and five women, including Mrs. Clark, Mrs. Pankhurst's sister, were taken into custody. The next day, four of them were sentenced to one month's imprisonment,

while the fifth expressed her willingness, for private reasons, to be bound over.

When Parliament met, on February 16, and there was again no mention of the question in the King's Speech, both militant societies determined to take action.

### **Demonstration on the Part of the Freedom League**

Members of the Freedom League were appointed to carry a resolution of protest to Mr. Asquith, and handbills explaining the constitutional nature of this demand were distributed by Miss Matters over London, from an airship.

On February 18, both in the afternoon and evening, attempts were made to carry the Resolution to the House, with the result that twenty-six women, including Mrs. Despard, were arrested, as was also Mr. Joseph Clayton, a journalist, who protested on behalf of the deputation at the Strangers' Entrance. The sentences varied from fourteen days' to one month's imprisonment, and in the case of one prisoner, Mrs. Meredith Macdonald, serious consequences arose. Happening one day to slip on the frosty stones, when exercising in the prison yard, she fractured her thigh, but the proffered assistance of her fellow prisoners not being in accordance with prison regulations, she was ordered by the wardress to drag herself unaided to her cell. Her sufferings were ignored by the authorities, and the injury was not diagnosed, with the help of X Rays, until such considerable time had elapsed that the damage was found to be irreparable, and nothing could then be done to prevent life-long lameness. Legal proceedings were taken the following year, with the result that Mrs. Macdonald was awarded £500 damages and her costs, which amounted to an equal sum.

Mrs. Despard was very shortly released "on medical grounds."

### **Sixth Women's Convention : Ninth "Raid"**

The W.S.P.U. meanwhile had made arrangements for another Convention, and for another deputation to Parliament. This was advertised in various ways, among others the sending of "human letters" to Mr. Asquith, which were of course returned as "dead letters." An imitation "Black Maria" drove through the streets of London, and discharged its burden, consisting of a number of women in prison garb, who set about distributing leaflets in Regent Street.

Caxton Hall was as usual hired for the Convention, which was held on February 24, and when the deputation, led by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, sallied forth, a repetition of scenes which had already taken place on eight occasions was enacted. There were twenty-nine arrests, including the leader and Lady Constance Lytton, and on declining to be bound over, the defendants were sentenced by Sir Albert de Rutzen, at Bow Street, to terms of imprisonment varying from one to two months.

### **Uneasiness in Parliament**

As on previous occasions, questions asked in the House testified to the uneasiness felt by some Members as to the justice of what was going on. Mr. Hugh Law stated, and the statement was never refuted, that one policeman said he had arrested one woman for wearing the colours of the W.S.P.U., and many questions were asked as to the treatment of this or that prisoner. On March 23, on a motion for the adjournment of the House, Mr. MacNeill seized the opportunity for drawing attention to the treatment of the prisoners generally, and he stated that he should continue to urge the matter on the Home Secretary in every possible way, for he alone was responsible. Mr. MacNeill was supported, among others, by Mr. John Dillon, who said: "Nothing is more likely to strengthen the movement than the scandalous and outrageous treatment to which these ladies have been subjected."

All such protests and warnings, however, fell on deaf ears. Mr. Samuel, replying for the Home Secretary, said the ladies were receiving most considerate treatment, and reiterated the statement that the Division in which they were placed was a matter for the discretion of the magistrate before whom they were tried.

### **Mr. Howard's Adult Suffrage Bill**

Meanwhile, Parliament had given its annual sign that it recognized the fact that the question of the enfranchisement of women existed, for Mr. Geoffrey Howard's Adult Suffrage Bill, which had been introduced on February 19, reached its Second Reading on March 19. This Bill, if carried into law, would have enfranchised some twenty-one or twenty-two million new voters, eleven or twelve million of whom would have been women—that is, the existing electorate of some seven million would have been increased about threefold. This sweeping measure was opposed by all Suffrage Societies, and with good reason, for Mr. Howard himself, in introducing it, admitted that he did not anticipate that it would become law, but that he hoped it would “clear the way” for the Premier's promised Reform Bill. He maintained that such a great reform as the enfranchisement of women could never be passed, as hitherto attempted, on non-party lines, for, in his opinion, the question was inseparable from that of the reform of the Franchise Laws generally. He was seconded by Sir Charles McLaren, who wished to see domestic servants excluded, in order to equalize the number of men and women. Mr. H. W. Forster, in opposing, said it sometimes happened that Government took up a Private Member's Bill, but that it would not be so this time. They might be willing to administer baptism, but not confirmation. Mr. Bertram, who also opposed, declared that it was untrue to say that the House did not legislate for women, and further argued thus: “As far as this House is concerned, you are not entitled to



press the view that women desire the vote. We are not here representing women. We have no right, without the approval of men voters, to bring in (this) measure." He approved neither of a limited nor of a comprehensive measure. Earl Percy admitted the disadvantages under which women lay, but simply would not have admitted them to the franchise. Mr. Massie, who that day had presented a petition, with over 243,000 signatures, against the granting of the franchise to women, urged that the granting of it on any terms would eventually lead to the inclusion of all women, and then they would be in a majority. Mr. Dickinson, who supported, urged the claims of the law-abiding Suffragists, but asked whether, after all, the militant methods were not justifiable, and, under the circumstances, inevitable, and prophesied the growth of the movement. Sir Michael Hicks Beach opposed the Bill from the Conservative point of view, saying that while votes for women of property was all very well, a Bill on the lines of the one under consideration was not one for a Private Member to bring forward, nor one for the Government to adopt until the sense of the House and of the electorate had been taken.

Mr. Asquith, in winding up the debate, said that his own attitude was unchanged, and that members of the Government were not agreed on the subject. They were, however, all agreed as to the necessity of reform in other respects, such as plural voting, distinction between lodgers and occupiers, period of qualification, and simplification of the machinery of registration. He added that any measure of the kind should proceed from the responsible Government of the day. The division was then taken, the Unionist Whips officially telling against the Bill, and there voted for it 158, and against it 124. There was thus a majority of 34, as compared with the majority of 179 recorded for Mr. Stanger's Bill of the preceding year. The Bill, being referred to a Committee of the whole House, passed, like its predecessors, into oblivion. (*Official Reports*, Col. 1,360 *et seq.*, Vol. 2).

### **Seventh Women's Convention : Tenth "Raid"**

Suffragists were thus once more confronted with the alternative of acknowledging defeat, or of continuing to urge their claims in and out of season. They chose the latter alternative.

Within a very few days—*i.e.*, on March 30—another meeting was summoned at the Caxton Hall by the W.S.P.U., and another deputation, led by Mrs. Saul Solomon, widow of the Governor-General of South Africa, set forth for Westminster, the usual request to Mr. Asquith to receive it having been refused in the usual way. The procession was permitted to reach the doors of the House, and Mrs. Solomon was even allowed inside, where she was told that the Prime Minister was not in. Colonel Seely, whom she saw, refused to carry a message to him. Scenes of a now familiar kind took place, scenes which Members of Parliament, on this, as on other similar occasions, witnessed from behind a safe barrier of police. Twenty arrests were made on this and on the following day, when members of the deputation renewed their endeavours to see Mr. Asquith, and sentences of one month's imprisonment were imposed in all cases but one, the exception being Miss Patricia Woodlock, whose previous three convictions were duly taken into consideration, and the heavy sentence of three months' imprisonment imposed. It should be mentioned that no violence whatever was used either by Miss Woodlock or any other member of the deputation.

### **Houses of Parliament Bill**

Ever since the famous grille scene of the previous year, the public galleries of the House had remained closed, a circumstance which occasioned considerable inconvenience to Members and their friends. The matter was referred to a Select Committee, the result of whose deliberations was embodied in the "Houses of Parliament Bill," the Second Reading of which took place on April 20. It was introduced by the

Attorney-General (Sir W. Robson), who explained that its object was to relegate the powers of the House to deal with any disturbance which might occur within its precincts to a police magistrate, who would be empowered to inflict a penalty up to £100 or six months' imprisonment. The arrest of the offender could be effected by an officer of the House on the authority of the Lord Chancellor or of the Speaker.

Two things were strikingly brought out in the course of the debate—on the one hand, the deep sense of humiliation felt by Members at the loss of dignity the House had sustained on the occasion of past disturbances, on the other, their admitted inability to prevent the recurrence of such scenes. Their object now was to avoid the publicity which would be entailed by summoning an offender to the Bar of the House, or even of appointing a special Committee to deal with the matter, and on the other hand to mete out exemplary punishment, for one of the difficulties in dealing with the matter in the House itself was that if the offence took place near the end of a Session, the offender would be released when the House adjourned.

Many, however, were the objections raised to this piece of "panic legislation," as it was described by more than one who took part in the debate. One Member declared it would be an Aunt Sally for every Suffragette to have a shy at. Two of these objections indeed proved insuperable. It was pointed out that Members might be summoned as witnesses, particularly the Speaker, who would be responsible for the arrest in the first instance, the Serjeant-at-Arms, and the Clerks at the Table. Such an "array of talent," as one Member pointed out, including the "quintessence of the collective wisdom of the House," as another described the Speaker, in a police court would undoubtedly supply the advertisement which those who created the disturbance would welcome, but which should at all costs be avoided. The other difficulty was that a penalty of the amount contemplated would carry with it the

right of appeal to a higher court, when all these proceedings would take place *da capo*, with the added importance which a trial by judge and jury would entail.

In view of these difficulties, Mr. Asquith, in winding up the debate, moved its adjournment, in order that the Government and all sections of the House might have independent and friendly conference on the subject, and devise something else which would be "more consonant with the dignity of the House." The debate was accordingly deferred for a week, and as a matter of historical fact has never been renewed.

Mr. Keir Hardie alone, among all the speakers who took part in the debate, several of whom referred to the absolute necessity of stopping the disturbances, went to the root of the matter, by reminding the House that the methods Suffragists were adopting, were due to the fact that women felt they could no longer appeal to the honour of that assembly.

Two other points may just be mentioned. Sir W. Robson, in his introductory speech, referred to the offences against which the Bill was directed as being "connected with some organized political movement," a singular admission on the part of a member of a Government which had consistently refused to recognize the political character of the agitation as far as those suffering imprisonment for offences connected therewith were concerned, and whose avowed object it was to remit such offenders to an ordinary Court of Law, where they should be dealt with, "not as matters of great State importance, but as ordinary matters of police jurisdiction" (*Official Reports*, Col. 1,383 *et seq.*, Vol. 3).

The other point is the use of the word "person," and of the pronoun "he" in reference to it. Sir W. Robson said, *à propos* of this, that under the Interpretation of the Statutes Act, the masculine imports the feminine, and "any person" would be construed as being applicable to members of both sexes in that connection.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 82, 84.



### **Two more Gatherings at the Albert Hall**

Twice in one week, in the spring of 1909, was the Albert Hall the scene of notable gatherings connected with the movement. The International Suffrage Congress was held this year in London, and on April 27 the delegates were entertained by the London Society for Women's Suffrage at the Albert Hall, when a remarkable pageant, illustrating the professions and trades in which British women were engaged, was organized. From the women doctors, in their gorgeous robes, to the pit-brow women, every branch of women's work was represented.

Two days later, about two hundred of the delegates attended a mass meeting organized by the W.S.P.U. in the same hall. The character of the speeches may be gauged from this short quotation from Mrs. Pankhurst's opening remarks: "No people enslaved ever had freedom given to them; they always had to win it for themselves"; while in the course of her speech Miss Christabel Pankhurst said: "Remember the dignity of your womanhood. Do not appeal, do not beg, do not grovel; take courage, join hands, stand beside us, fight with us."

### **The National League for Opposing Woman Suffrage**

It was at this period that opposition to the movement began to show signs of activity, and on June 28 the first Annual Meeting of the Council of the Women's National Anti-Suffrage League, which afterwards became the "National League for opposing Woman Suffrage," was held at the Caxton Hall, with Lady Jersey in the chair. It was reported that the League numbered roughly 9,000 members, and that 95 branches existed in different parts of the kingdom. The chief activities reported were the holding of some 400 meetings, including one at the Queen's Hall in March, from which, however, it was thought wise, in view of the tactics of the Suffragettes, to exclude Cabinet Ministers, and the collection

of signatures to the great petition presented by Mr. Massie on the day of the Second Reading of Mr. Howard's Bill. An appeal was made for the "modest hundreds" needed to carry on the work of organization throughout the country.

### The Bill of Rights

Whether it was the action of the authorities in threatening prosecutions under the Statute of Charles II. which stimulated the Suffragettes' interest in history, or whether some other agency was at work, is not quite clear, but in any case, the pages of history were zealously scanned for precedents, more especially regarding the right of petition, and interesting facts were unearthed. For instance, there was the case of one Francis Smith, who in the year of grace 1680 was committed to Newgate Gaol for this very offence of "going up and down getting hands to petitions"; but when his and similar cases were brought before the House, votes were unanimously passed to the effect "that it is, and ever hath been, the undoubted right of the subjects of England to petition the King for . . . redressing of grievances, and that to traduce such petitioning is a violation of duty." The result was that not only was the worthy Smith released without a stain upon his character, but one member, Sir F. Wilkins, was named as having acted contrary to these votes, and for the high crime of having betrayed the undoubted rights of the subjects of England was expelled from the House. He received his sentence at the Bar of the House, upon his knees before the Speaker, and Sir Francis North, a Judge who had pronounced sentence on presenters of petitions, was impeached and heavily fined. Apparently there were no half measures in those good old days (Cobbett's *Parliamentary History*, Vol. 4, p. 1,171 *et seq.*, p. 1,289).

But chiefly the Suffragettes derived comfort and support from the fifth clause of the Bill of Right (1689), which runs as follows: "It is the right of the subject to petition the King,

and all commitments and prosecutions for such petitioning are illegal." The meaning of this seemed clear enough, always supposing that a woman, who apparently could not be a person, could claim to be a subject of the King. It was argued that in the case of a constitutional monarch, a petition to the King must be presented through one of his Ministers, and preparations were accordingly made to do so on June 29. A few days before, a member of the Union whose name has already been mentioned, Miss Wallace Dunlop, succeeded in marking up the words quoted above in the Lobby of the House of Commons, in indelible ink, an irregularity which was swiftly visited by the penalty of a fine of £5 and damages, or of one month's imprisonment in the Third Division. The latter alternative was selected, with what results must be recorded in a later chapter.

## APPENDIX TO PART II

**"An Act against Tumults and Disorders upon Pretence of Presenting or Preparing Public Petitions or Other Addresses to His Majesty or the Parliament" (13 Charles II., Chap. 5).**

Whereas it hath been found by sad experience that tumult and other disorderly soliciting and procuring of hands by private persons to petitions, complaints, and remonstrances, and declarations and other addresses to the King or to both or either Houses of Parliament for alteration of matters established by Law, redress of pretended grievances in Church or State, or other public concernments, have been made use of to serve the ends of factious and seditious persons, gotten into power, to the violation of the public peace, and have been a great means of the late unhappy wars, contusions, and calamities in this nation; for preventing the like mischief in the future, Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, and by and with the consent of the Lords and Commons, assembled in Parliament, and by the authority of the same,



That no person or persons whatsoever shall from and after the first of August, 1661, sollicite labour or procure the getting of hands or other consent of any persons above the number of twenty or more to any petition, complaint, remonstrance, declaration or other addresses to the King or both or either Houses of Parliament for alteration of matters established by Law in Church or State, unless the matter thereof have been first consented unto and ordered by three or more Justices of that County, or by the major part of the Grand Jury of the County, or division of the County, where the same matter shall arise at their public assizes or general Quarter Sessions, or, if arising in London, by the Lord Mayor, Aldermen, and Commons in Common Council assembled; and that no person or persons whatsoever shall repair to His Majesty or both or either of the Houses of Parliament upon pretence of presenting or delivering any petition, complaint, remonstrance, or declaration or other addresses, accompanied with excessive number of people, nor at any time with above the number of *ten persons*, upon pain of incurring a penalty not exceeding the sum of £100 in money, and three months' imprisonment without bail or mainprize for every offence, which offence to be prosecuted at the Court of King's Bench or at the Assizes or General Quarter Sessions, within six months after the offence committed, and proved by two or more credible witnesses.

Provided always that this Act, or anything therein contained, shall not be construed to extend, to debar or hinder any person or persons, not exceeding the number of ten aforesaid, to present any publick or private grievance or complaint to any member or members of Parliament, after his election and during the continuance of the Parliament, or to the King's Majesty, for any remedy to be thereupon had; nor to extend to any address whatsoever to His Majesty by all or any the Members of both or either Houses of Parliament during the sitting of Parliament, but that they may enjoy their freedom of access to His Majesty as heretofore hath been used.

### Public Meeting Act, 1908

*Memorandum.*—If any person or body of persons break up a public meeting or prevent any of the speakers from being heard, the law at present provides no remedy, unless an actual assault takes place, or the facts warrant



an indictment for conspiracy. The object of this Bill is to make disorderly conduct at a meeting with the purpose of preventing the transaction of the meeting an offence.

### **A Bill to prevent Disturbance of Public Meetings**

(1) Any person who at a lawful public meeting acts in a disorderly manner for the purpose of preventing the transaction of the business for which the meeting was called together shall be guilty of an offence, and, being summarily convicted thereof, shall be liable to a penalty not exceeding five pounds, or imprisonment for a period not exceeding one month.

(2) Any person who commits an offence under this section at a political meeting during the progress of a Parliamentary Election shall be guilty of an illegal practice.

(3) Any fine imposed under this Act may be recovered as a civil debt to the Crown.

### **Houses of Parliament Bill, 1909**

#### **A BILL TO MAKE BETTER PROVISION FOR PUNISHING STRANGERS WHO ABUSE THE PRIVILEGE OF ADMISSION TO EITHER HOUSE OF PARLIAMENT**

(1) If any person not being a member of either House of Parliament, while present in the Palace of Westminster during the sitting of either House, is guilty of disorderly conduct or acts in contravention of any rule or order of either House with respect to the admission and conduct of strangers, he shall be guilty of a misdemeanour, and liable on summary conviction to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding one hundred pounds.

(2) Any person who commits an offence under this Act may, unless the Lord Chancellor or Mr. Speaker otherwise orders, be arrested without warrant within the Palace of Westminster, and for the purpose of such arrest, any officer of either House shall have all the powers and privileges of a constable.

(3) No proceedings shall be instituted under this Act without the sanction of the Lord Chancellor or of Mr. Speaker.

(4) Nothing in this Act shall affect the privileges of either House of Parliament, or any power of either such House to proceed in accordance with ancient usages.

## PART III

## WORK OF SUFFRAGISTS AT BY-ELECTIONS

(1906-1914)

**The Anti-Government Policy of the W.S.P.U.**

REFERENCE has more than once been made to the work of the various Women's Suffrage organizations at by-elections, and it seems well at this point to make a digression on this subject, and to summarize, as far as it is possible to do so, the influence exerted by Suffragists at these times of political strife.

Quite early in the militant campaign, Christabel Pankhurst realized that the ability of the Private Member, no matter how well disposed he might be towards the question, was practically *nil*, and that the only way to victory lay in securing Government support. So, as we have seen, during the General Election of 1905, questions were asked whenever possible of Liberal Ministers with regard to the attitude of the Liberals on the subject. The members of the Government refused to answer such questions, thereby convincing her that they did not propose to satisfy women's demands. In the years which have already been reviewed (1906-1908 inclusive), the Government went further, and by refusing facilities to Private Members' Bills gave convincing proof of their hostility to the movement. Moreover, by the end of the year 1908, over three hundred women had been arrested and imprisoned for pressing forward their claim to the franchise, two only of whom had been convicted of throwing stones. It was clear, therefore, that nothing would be done voluntarily, and members of the Women's Social and Political Union

addressed themselves to the hard task of fighting for themselves by opposing the Government at contested by-elections.

This policy was based upon the relationship which exists between Parliamentary Candidates and the parties to which they are attached. A Candidate seeking election does so on the ground of his support of the programme of his party; he is supported in his campaign by the party machinery, and if he is successful, he goes to Parliament pledged to support that party, whatever his personal views on a specific question may be. Theoretically he may exercise his own discretion, even to the extent of voting against his own party, but it is safe to say that this right is rarely exercised, the alternatives of unconditional resignation, or of seeking re-election on the point at issue, being other possible solutions where a serious difference of opinion is concerned.

Again, a Private Member may "introduce" a Bill on his own account, but he has no power to get it carried, as the fate of various Women's Suffrage Bills amply demonstrated.

For instance, in the case of Mr. Stanger's Bill, the Second Reading of which was carried by the largest majority which any Women's Suffrage Bill commanded, namely, 179, it would have made no difference if this majority had been slightly smaller, or slightly larger. What was needed was the goodwill of the Government to provide the necessary facilities.

This being so, the question which the ordinary elector has to decide at an election is not whether he approves of this or that Candidate, but whether the policy of the party to which this or that Candidate belongs is the one which commends itself to him. At a by-election in particular, the electors have the opportunity of expressing their approval or disapproval of a policy which at the time is in force, and the verdict of the electors is anxiously awaited on these occasions, as evidence of the success or otherwise with which the affairs of the nation are being conducted, in the opinion of those concerned.

That the Private Member is no more than a pawn in the political game is explained by Mr. Sydney Low, in his book, *The Governance of England*, in these words:

"A Member of Parliament is elected to vote for a particular Ministry or to vote against it; he is the delegate of his constituents. . . . They do not send him to Parliament to exercise his independence. They would be particularly annoyed and irritated if he did, and they scrutinize his votes with jealous care in order that they may take him to task very speedily, and with no superfluous delicacy or reserve, if he shows any dangerous tendency in that direction. And the modern M.P. understands the conditions of his political existence so well that in point of fact he hardly ever does vote against his party or any party issue when his own side is in office. . . .

"The (rank and file) ministerialist is only in a limited sense a legislator; he has scarcely any power to make new laws, or to prevent them being made, or to amend old ones. He is not consulted on Bills which Ministers propose to introduce; he sees them only when they come from the printers, and then he knows that whether he likes them or not, he will be expected to support them by his vote in the Lobbies. . . .

"The real political sovereign and the arbiter of the destinies of Cabinets is the electoral body. . . . The powers which determine the existence and extinction of Cabinets have shifted, first from the Crown to the Commons, and then from the Commons to the constituencies. . . .

"It is the constituencies which in fact decide on the combination of party Leaders to whom they will from time to time delegate their authority. . . . The Member of Parliament sent to the House of Commons by his constituents goes there under a pledge—which is almost, though not quite, binding—that he will cast his vote under all normal conditions, during the life of the Parliament, for the authorized leaders of his party."

The policy of opposing the Government nominee at by-elections had been adopted by Parnell in the interests of Home



Rule in the eighties, on the principle that with his small party it was the only method by which he could hope to wear down the opposition of the Government of the day. The same policy had been adopted by Mrs. Josephine Butler in her agitation for the repeal of the C.D. Acts, and it was adopted by the W.S.P.U. very early in the history of the militant movement. It was not, nor did it profess to be, a constructive policy, but, so it was argued, it was the only one suited to the circumstances. For if women were already voters, they could adopt the recognized methods of making their discontent with any particular measure felt, such as working for or against a particular Candidate—that is, for or against a particular party—or possibly by running a Candidate of their own. So the determination was formed of working against all Liberal Candidates, irrespective of their attitude on the question of Women's Suffrage. The difficulty and boldness of such a course was, in the opinion of those who set themselves to work to give it practical effect, no bar whatever. Indeed, that indomitable woman, Mrs. Drummond, set off single-handed, with a "campaign fund" of £5, in the spring of 1906, to try conclusions with the Liberal nominee at Eye. (*Suffolk Chronicle and Mercury*, April 6, 1906.)

The Liberal majority was indeed reduced, but it is obviously impossible to estimate what the effect of the policy was in this or in subsequent campaigns, when the resources at the disposal of the Suffragettes were considerably augmented. For, apart from other considerations, it is well known how various are the forces at work at any election, more especially a by-election. The party in power may on these occasions find itself severely handicapped by the "swing of the pendulum," as to which many explanations may be given, according to the point of view of those who offer them. Again, the personal popularity of the Candidates, the condition of the weather, the change in the size of the electorate, the number of "removals," the entry into the field of a third Candidate,

to take a few other factors, more or less at random, have to be reckoned with in most cases. That women should ignore all this, and, throwing aside their personal predilections, should enter the political arena, boldly announcing that they did not put their trust in any party until such time as justice should be done to their question—all this marks a distinct departure from the tactics of former years.

### Policy of the National Union

After the militants had taken the field, the situation was complicated by the entry of the non-militants, with a totally different policy from that outlined above. Thinking it still to be the wisest course to placate prospective Members of Parliament, they interviewed the Candidates, with a view to ascertaining their attitude on the question, and then gave their support to whichever was thought to be the most sound. According to their own estimates of the answers rendered, these were classified as "favourable," "not unfavourable," and "opposed," and the candidature of the least unfavourable was espoused. So, beginning with the by-election at Hexham, in March, 1907, the "constitutional" Suffragists persevered in their efforts to bring pressure to bear on the Government through the electorate, as the Annual Report of the National Union for 1908 claimed was being done. In some cases they confined themselves to propaganda work, and in some to securing the signatures of voters to petitions in favour of Women's Suffrage as they emerged from the polling booths. All this certainly kept the question before members of the public, reminding them that it was by no means a dead one, while the conflicting policies advocated must have been disconcerting to party politicians, desirous of propagating their own doctrines without let or hindrance. It may be observed incidentally that the situation thus generated offered a curious commentary on the theory that in political matters all women would be on some one side. In point of fact, many members of the older

society, feeling that the new policy was the more effective one of the two, threw in their lot with the W.S.P.U. from the time of its inception. In some cases they did not altogether sever their connection with the National Union, and it even happened (at Hexham for instance) that members of this Union were to be found working on both sides. There was indeed much confusion.

### **Policy of the Women's Freedom League**

From the year 1908 onwards, the Women's Freedom League, having by then become a separate organization, also adopted the anti-Government policy at by-elections, and the contests in which this society took part are indicated in the complete list given on pp. 108-110. In the year 1912, both the National Union and the Women's Freedom League adopted the policy of giving assistance and support, not to the Labour party, but to Candidates standing in the Labour interest against Liberals. It was claimed by the latter that this scheme did not involve any change in the non-party, anti-Government policy, and that it was far more subtle and effective than mere support of the Labour party. The W.S.P.U., on the other hand, maintained its attitude of independence of all parties whatsoever, and persevered in its policy of opposing the Government with all the forces at its disposal. Only at one period, as we shall see, when the Conciliation Bill was under consideration, and a truce had been declared, was there any cessation of hostilities.

Special mention must be made of two occasions on which a Woman's Suffrage Candidate took the field on that single issue, namely, at Wimbledon in 1907, and at Bow and Bromley in 1912.

### **The Wimbledon By-Election**

In May, 1907, the National Union decided to run a Woman's Suffrage Candidate, when, by the resignation of the Conservative Member, there was a vacancy in the Wimbledon

constituency, and they selected a well-known Liberal, the Hon. Bertrand Russell, as their Candidate. He was defeated, but the issue was by no means a clear-cut one. Wimbledon had always been a Conservative stronghold, the Conservative Candidate having been returned unopposed at the General Elections of 1895 and 1900, and the retiring Member having been returned by a majority of over 2,000 in 1906, in spite of the great Liberal revival of that year. The Liberal party therefore decided not to oppose Mr. Chaplin, the Conservative Candidate, and but for the intervention of the National Union, there would have been no contest. In his election address, Mr. Russell said: "I ask for the Liberal vote because I am a Liberal through and through," and throughout the campaign such questions as Free Trade, the Taxation of Land Values, and other matters figuring on the Liberal programme were consistently advocated. Thus, though the question of the suffrage was necessarily not eliminated, it was by no means the primary issue. The Conservative vote was increased by 740, but the chief reason for Mr. Russell's defeat was the abstention of the Liberals, there being a reduction of over 4,000 in the Liberal poll, as there was no official backing of his candidature. The contest was thus fought on the usual party lines, without the assistance of the party machinery.

### **The Bow and Bromley Election**

The circumstances connected with this contest will not be fully understood until the events which took place in the years 1909-1912 have been perused. It is, however, convenient to deal with this question of by-elections in a chapter to itself, and without going into details regarding matters which will be dealt with later on, the political factors of this contest may be summarized. Suffice it to say, then, that Mr. Lansbury felt, after deep deliberation, he must go to his constituents and get from them a mandate as to the attitude



he had adopted on the subject of the emancipation of women, by standing as an independent Women's Suffrage candidate. In seeking re-election under these circumstances in November, 1912, a few months after the scene in the House described later on, he received the enthusiastic support of societies other than the W.S.P.U. A spirited contest took place, which this time was fought on a straight issue, but which resulted in the defeat of Mr. Lansbury by the majority of 751. An examination of the various factors in the situation, however, makes it a matter of surprise that he should have polled as many as 3,291 votes, for he found himself opposed by every political party, his chief supporters, the women, having, of course, no means of giving effect to their views. Not only was he opposed by the Unionists, who were running a Candidate of their own, but by the Liberals, who, though having no Candidate of their own, realized that his return on the one issue would be a severe condemnation of the Government's policy of coercion, and the Labour party, being in alliance with the Liberals, could not, or at any rate did not, afford official help. Again, the newspapers, in almost every case, took the line that the election was not being fought on the Suffrage issue, and each sought to grind its own axe.

### **Work of Suffragists at the General Election of 1910**

In the General Election of January, 1910, the W.S.P.U. fought the Government in some forty constituencies, in eighteen of which the Liberal was defeated. The Liberal administration was thereafter dependent on a "Coalition" vote. The National Union carried out propaganda work, except in the case of noted supporters, or noted opponents, whom they supported or opposed as the case might be. They also collected the signatures of 280,000 voters. In the December election of the same year, the W.S.P.U. directed its attention specially to some fifty constituencies, in ten of which seats formerly held by Government supporters were wrested from

them. Space is too limited to permit of any details of these fights, and the issues were too complicated to permit of deductions being drawn with any degree of accuracy. At this same election the National Union succeeded in obtaining the signatures of 300,000 voters.

### **The Truce of 1911**

The only exception to the policy of uncompromising hostility on the part of the W.S.P.U. to the nominee of the Government at by-elections occurred in the year 1911, from July to the end of October, when a truce was in force, in view of the promises made concerning the Conciliation Bill. During this period the Candidates were asked for pledges to support the Bill, and to abstain from wrecking Amendments, and support was given to those Candidates whose answers were most satisfactory. The militants demonstrated their catholicity of political sympathies by supporting a Liberal on one occasion (Central Hull), a Conservative on another (West Somerset), and a Labour Candidate on yet another (Kilmarnock District). When the answers of all the Candidates with regard to the Conciliation Bill were unsatisfactory, propaganda work alone was carried on.

### **Summary of Results**

For reasons given above, it is impossible to isolate the question of Women's Suffrage from all others, and to estimate what the net result of all this activity was. The utmost that can be done is to record the changes in the poll in those constituencies where the anti-Government policy was pursued consistently during the years 1906-1914, and to compare the result with that obtained from a similar investigation with regard to by-elections in which the question did not enter.

In all, 134 by-elections took place in Great Britain during the years under consideration. Of these, 83 were "contested" by the W.S.P.U., and in most cases by the Freedom League

as well. In three others, the latter society supported the Labour Candidate, in accordance with its modified policy of 1912. In ten cases, propaganda work alone was done, in two a Women's Suffrage Candidate was run, and in eight, no Liberal Candidate entered the field. This leaves 28 for purposes of comparison—that is, approximately one-third the number of those in which the anti-Government policy was adopted.

Among the 83 “contested” elections have been included two, at South-West Bethnal Green and Keighley, which occurred during the truce, but at which the Government nominee was nevertheless the Candidate opposed, on account of his personal attitude on the question.

From the tables given on pp. 108-111, the following facts appear:

Of the 83 by-elections where the Liberal was opposed,

In 26 cases, the seat was lost, 3 of these having been previously held by Cabinet Ministers.

In 47 cases, the Liberal majority was reduced, or the Unionist majority increased.

In 9 cases only was it the other way about.

In one case, a seat previously held by Labour was ceded to the Liberals.

The net loss of Liberal votes was 83,303, which, excluding the case in which there is no figure to record, works out to an average loss of over 1,000 votes on each election, 1,016, to be exact.

Of the 28 other elections:

In two cases the seat was lost.

In the majority of cases, the Liberal majority was reduced, or the Unionist majority increased.

In 6 cases, it was the other way about.

The net loss of Liberal votes was 9,744, which works out to an average loss of 348 on each election.

CONTESTED BY-ELECTIONS, 1906-1914, IN WHICH THE LIBERAL NOMINEE WAS  
OPPOSED BY SUFFRAGISTS

<i>Date of Poll.</i>	<i>Constituency.</i>	<i>Result.</i>	<i>Effect on Liberal Poll.</i>	
			Decrease.	Increase.
1906. April 6	Eye	Liberal majority reduced	96	—
1 Aug. 3	Cockermouth	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,253 votes	1,440	—
Nov. 28	Huddersfield	Liberal majority reduced	540	—
1907. 1 Feb. 20	S. Aberdeen	Liberal majority reduced	3,001	—
Mar. 27	Hexham	Liberal majority reduced	231	—
May 10	Stepney	Unionist majority increased	503	—
June 11	Rutland	Unionist majority increased	202	—
1 July 4	Jarrow	Unionist majority increased	4,573	—
1 July 18	Colne Valley	Seat lost to Labour. Liberal 3rd on list	1,204	—
1 July 31	N.-W. Staffs.	Seat lost to Socialist	271	—
1 Aug. 24	Bury St. Edmunds	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	306	—
1 Nov. 29	W. Hull	Unionist majority increased	3,029	—
1908. Jan. 17	Mid Devon	Liberal majority reduced	447	—
Jan. 31	S. Hereford	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,848 votes	569	—
2 Feb. 7	Worcester	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,331 votes	683	—
Feb. 13	S. Leeds	Liberal majority increased	926	—
Mar. 3	Hastings	Liberal majority reduced	458	—
2 Mar. 24	Peckham	Unionist majority increased	1,427	—
2 April 23	Dewsbury	Seat lost. Turnover of 4,833 votes	1,170	—
12 April 24	N.-W. Manchester	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,670 votes	651	—
2 April 25	Kincardine	Liberal majority reduced	216	—
2 May 5	E. Wolverhampton	Liberal majority reduced	1,096	—
2 May 9	Dundee	Liberal majority reduced	620	—
12 May 12	Montrose	Liberal majority <i>increased</i> . "Safe seat"	1,333	—
2 May 14	N. Shropshire	Liberal majority reduced	300	—
2 May 22	Stirling	Unionist majority increased	—	1,158
1 June 20	Pudsey	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	1,712	—
		Seat lost. Turnover of 3,615 votes	—	—



12 Aug.	Haggerston	Seat lost.	Turnover of 1,544 votes	1,048	—
2 Sept.	Newcastle-on-Tyne	Seat lost.	Turnover of 8,624 votes	6,703	—
2 Nov. 30	Mid Essex	Unionist majority increased		874	—
2 Feb.	Forfarshire	Unionist majority reduced		374	—
2 Mar.	Central Glasgow	Seat lost.	Turnover of 2,544 votes	1,535	—
2 Mar.	S. Edinburgh	Liberal majority reduced		760	—
2 Mar.	Hawick	Liberal majority reduced		97	—
2 Mar.	Croydon	Unionist majority increased		—	468
2 April 16	E. Edinburgh	Liberal majority reduced		2,079	—
12 May	Athercliffe	Seat lost.	Liberal 3rd on list	3,348	—
12 May	Stratford-on-Avon	Seat lost.	Turnover of 2,775 votes	1,574	—
2 July	Cleveland	Liberal majority reduced		—	462
2 July	Dumfries	Liberal majority reduced		158	—
2 July	High Peak	Liberal majority reduced		—	169
12 Oct.	Bermondsey	Seat lost.	Turnover of 2,746 votes	1,484	—
2 Mar.	St. George's-in-the-Eas	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>		—	30
2 Mar.	Ilkeston	Liberal majority reduced		428	—
2 Mar.	Mid Glamorgan	Lib. maj. reduced (no Unionist Candidate)		4,255	—
2 Oct.	S. Shields	Liberal majority reduced		1,161	—
2 Nov.	Walthamstow	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>		1,053	—
2 Nov.	West Wilts	Liberal majority reduced		—	32
2 Feb.	Cheltenham	Seat lost.	Mr. Agg Gardner returned	—	193
12 July	S.-W. Bethnal Green	Liberal majority reduced		23	—
12 Oct.	Keighley	Liberal majority reduced		3,101	—
1 Nov.	Oldham	Seat lost.	Turnover of 5,133 votes	6,402	—
2 Nov.	Hitchin	Unionist majority increased		33	—
2 Dec.	N. Ayrshire	Seat lost.	Turnover of 625 votes	239	—
2 Dec.	Govan	Liberal majority reduced		901	—
2 Dec.	Caermarthen	Liberal majority reduced		361	—
2 Feb.	E. Edinburgh	Liberal majority reduced		1,372	—
2 Feb.	Glasgow (St. Rollox)	Liberal majority reduced		761	—
2 Mar.	S. Manchester	Seat lost.	Turnover of 3,031 votes	1,649	—
2 April	E. Nottingham	Unionist majority <i>reduced</i>		—	354
2 May	S. Hackney	Liberal majority reduced		1,675	—

CONTESTED BY-ELECTIONS, 1906-1914, IN WHICH THE LIBERAL NOMINEE WAS  
OPPOSED BY SUFFRAGISTS—*Continued*

<i>Date of Poll.</i>	<i>Constituency.</i>	<i>Result.</i>	<i>Effect on Liberal Poll</i>
1912.			
May 31	N.-W. Norfolk	Liberal majority reduced	Decrease. —
June 11	Hythe	Unionist majority <i>reduced</i>	Increase. 206
2 June 20	Holmfirth	Liberal majority reduced	— 50
2 July 1	Ilkerton	Liberal majority reduced	1,590
2 July 13	Henley	Liberal replaces Labour. No Liberal candidate since 1900	941
12 July 26	Crewe	Seat lost. Turnover of 2,670 votes.	—
2 Aug. 8	N.-W. Manchester	Seat lost a second time. Turnover of 1,647 votes	2,335
2 Nov. 23	Bolton	Liberal majority reduced	1,188
1913. 2 April 30	Whitechapel	Liberal majority reduced	347
May 16	Newmarket	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,250 votes	9
2 June 27	Leicester	Liberal majority reduced	386
2 Nov. 7	Linlithgow	Liberal majority reduced	2,375
12 Nov. 8	Reading	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,230 votes	220
2 Nov. 11	Keighley	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	1,081
Dec. 8	Wick	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	— 63
12 Dec. 12	S. Lanark	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,448 votes	— 62
1914. 1 Jan. 30	N.-W. Durham	Liberal majority reduced	1,154
2 Feb. 19	S.-W. Bethnal Green	Seat lost. Turnover of 208 votes	1,757
12 Feb. 20	Poplar <sup>3</sup>	Liberal majority reduced	— 59
12 Feb. 26	Leith	Seat lost. Turnover of 1,801 votes	429
1 May 23	Ipswich	Seat lost. Mr. Masterman being again rejected	1,926
			— 13

<sup>1</sup> Three-cornered election. Labour not having been represented at previous contest.

<sup>2</sup> W.F.L. also working against the Government.

<sup>3</sup> "Contested" by East London Federation of the Suffragettes.

<i>Date of Poll.</i>	<i>Constituency.</i>	<i>Result.</i>	<i>Effect on Liberal Poll.</i>	
			<i>Decrease.</i>	<i>Increase.</i>
1906.	Feb. 27	Conservative majority increased	1,054	—
	<sup>1</sup> Mar. 12	Conservative majority increased	—	355
	Mar. 30	Liberal majority reduced	3,979	—
	May 15	Conservative majority increased	852	—
	July 24	Liberal majority reduced	232	—
1907.	Aug. 14	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	—	742
	Jan. 29	Liberal majority reduced	1,021	—
	Feb. 16	Liberal majority reduced	200	—
	Feb. 26	Seat lost	480	—
	April 2	Liberal majority reduced	—	348
1909.	April 15	Liberal majority reduced	330	—
	July 15	Liberal majority reduced	122	—
	April 30	Liberal majority reduced	372	—
1910.	June 20	Liberal majority reduced	—	10
	June 30	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	—	667
	Feb. 16	Conservative majority <i>reduced</i>	—	630
	Feb. 24	Liberal majority <i>increased</i>	1,872	—
	<sup>1</sup> Mar. 8	Liberal majority reduced	1,087	—
1911.	Mar. 27	Conservative majority increased	—	192
	May 6	Liberal majority reduced	—	—
	June 14	Liberal majority reduced	713	—
	Nov. 3	Liberal majority reduced	2,316	—
	Nov. 21	Liberal majority reduced	54	—
1912.	Nov. 11	Seat lost	—	—
	Nov. 11	Conservative majority increased	—	24
	Jan. 21	Liberal majority reduced	—	54
	Feb. 19	Conservative majority <i>reduced</i>	—	719
	Mar. 18	Conservative majority increased	53	—
1913.	May 28	Conservative majority increased	—	264
	May 28	Conservative majority <i>reduced</i>	—	988
	May 12	Conservative majority <i>reduced</i>	—	—

<sup>1</sup> Three-cornered election.

Total loss 9,744. Average loss 348.

### Method of Working

It may be mentioned that the methods of the W.S.P.U. at by-elections were purely constitutional. On hearing of an approaching contest, a body of workers would descend on the constituency, and some unoccupied shop would be hired as a Committee-Room. Public Halls would be engaged, and a programme of meetings would be arranged. There would also be a vigorous open-air campaign. An appeal was made directly to the electorate by such means, and by means of Suffrage literature, which was scattered broadcast. There would also be systematic house-to-house visiting, when time permitted. In many cases, processions were organized, and to the accompaniment of brass bands, and with banners flying, the round of the polling booths would be made, or a vast crowd would be collected in some prominent situation. Frequently a charge would be made for admission to the indoor meetings, or a collection would be taken to defray expenses.

In the preceding pages certain facts have been cited with regard to the loss which the Government sustained at the by-elections which took place in the years 1906-1914. The precise influence which the Suffragettes had in determining those results must necessarily be to a large extent a matter of conjecture. It remains, then, to quote a few of the opinions expressed at the time, and to give some account of the more important contests.

### Attitude of the Press

As in the case of other constitutional work on the part of the Suffragists, the Press on the whole sought to render it ineffective by ignoring it. Occasionally the Liberal organs would lecture the offenders on the folly of "alienating their best friends," and the Unionist organs would exhibit a certain amount of glee at the success of the Suffragists' methods, of which they reaped the benefit, or ridicule was poured forth,



or, in rare cases, a tribute was rendered. We quote instances of various kinds.

The *Morning Post* of August 1, 1907, speaking of the contest in North-West Staffs, observed: "The Suffragettes are the politicians of the election. Their organization is as good as their political insight. . . . The men usually hunt in couples. They do not care to face these hostile audiences single-handed, but each of these women, as often as not, tackles an audience alone. . . . Their staying power, judging them by the standard of men, is extraordinary. . . . They are up earlier, they retire just as late. Women against men, they are better speakers, more logical, better informed, better phrased,<sup>7</sup> with a surer insight for the telling argument."

The *Manchester Guardian* of January 20, 1908, commenting on the result of the Mid Devon election, said: "Mrs. Pankhurst . . . had anticipated a considerable reduction in Mr. Buxton's majority. . . . She put her prophecy in more emphatic terms than I cared . . . to reproduce; . . . but, bold as her prediction was, the event has outdone it. She counted merely on abstentions, whereas there have been actual marchings over to the enemy." And again: "I think there can be no doubt that the Suffragists did influence voters. Their activity, the interest shown in their meetings, the success of their persuasive methods, in enlisting popular sympathy, the large number of working women who acted with them as volunteers—these were features of the election which although strangely ignored by most of the newspapers, must have struck most visitors to the constituency." And the *Daily Express* of January 9, referring to the same contest, said: "The Women's Social and Political Union have issued a manifesto against the Liberal Candidate, which is causing dismay among the members of his party."

The leader writer of the *Hereford Times*, writing on January 30, 1908—that is, the day before the poll in South Hereford

—said: "The great bulk of the official Suffragettes are women who combine a spotless character with Liberal and democratic convictions. We who have been life-long advocates of Women's Suffrage may think that the policy of opposing the reforming party now in power, as a reminder to the Government, is not the right way to obtain the desired results; but we should be the last to contend that the invasion of a number of able and eloquent speakers into a constituency would not largely influence public opinion."

Writing before the poll in South Leeds, the *Daily News* of February 11, 1908, said: "No good purpose could be served by shutting one's eyes to the part which Women's Suffrage is playing on this occasion. In the opinion of South Leeds, at any rate, the Female Suffrage question has entered the region of immediate practical politics"; and three Yorkshire papers, the *Leeds Mercury*, the *Yorkshire Daily Post*, and the *Sheffield Telegraph*, all afterwards admitted that the intervention of the Suffragettes had been a determining factor in the situation.

In its issue of March 21, 1908—that is, three days before the poll at Peckham—the *Peckham Post* (Liberal) said: "Most of the London daily papers state that these ladies did not get a hearing in Peckham. This is not true. Wherever they go they are listened to with attention. We think it a great pity and a great mistake for the Government not to give them their votes."

Two Press notices among many may be cited regarding the contest at North-West Manchester. Said the *Daily News* of April 24, 1908, "The antagonism of the women lost many votes. We hope that the Liberal party, friendly, as every democratic party must be, to the principle of Women's Suffrage, will undertake to inscribe it on its programme at the next election." Said the *Standard* of the following day: "The women Suffragists cannot be said to have worked for Mr. Joynson-Hicks. They fought against Mr. Churchill; they fought with great courage and determination, and,

above all, skill, and I am convinced that they influenced many waverers to oppose Mr. Churchill." A *Punch* cartoon referring to this contest is of special interest.

The *Morning Post* was of like opinion on another occasion, namely, the Pembroke election. Its correspondent wrote on July 6, 1908: "Mrs. Pankhurst and a large body of Suffragettes are turning many waverers against the Liberal Candidate."

This is another testimony from the *Hereford Times*, written after the result of the Haggerston election had been made known—that is, on August 8, 1908: "This is the ninth Liberal defeat inflicted by the Liberal Mrs. Pankhurst. As in South Hereford, her speeches and tactics won hundreds of votes. We have watched every step in the campaign, and claim to be absolutely impartial witnesses, because, while we are heart and mind in favour of Woman Suffrage, we would never vote against a Liberal and Free Trade Government under any conceivable circumstances."

The *Christian Commonwealth* of September 23 of the same year remarked: "It is the fashion to be contemptuous of the influence of the W.S.P.U. at by-elections, but anyone who has had any experience of recent electoral contests knows that the invasion of the orators from Clement's Inn has repeatedly been a deciding factor in the fray. . . . I do not believe the public has the remotest idea of the immense impression Mrs. Pankhurst and her followers have produced in this work."

With reference to the Walthamstow election, the correspondent of the *Manchester Guardian*, writing in the issue of October 24, 1910, said: "The Suffragists are making a tremendous rally. They have three or four Committee-Rooms, they engage the best halls in the division, and though no doubt a certain portion of the work done in their behalf is of a voluntary character, their expenditure must run into several hundreds of pounds." And again, on the 31st, these words appear: "After the procession, the Suffragists had a splendid meeting in the theatre, and an overflow meeting in an adjoin-

ing hall. It is impossible to resist the conclusion that they have made an impression favourable to their cause in this campaign."

It may be added that at this contest over £96 was taken for admission to Suffrage meetings (chiefly for twopenny seats), and in collections.

The *Manchester Guardian*, too, it was which, speaking of the contest in South-West Bethnal Green, said, in its issue of July 28, 1911: "The really big meetings you find where the women are in possession. . . . It is absurd to suppose that the enormous output of work at this election will not affect votes. The three chief Suffragette organizations have been working here with all their thoroughness and devotion, holding hundreds of meetings, day and night, going from house to house with 'literature,' and talking to the women on their doorsteps. In this election they are using all their influence on the side of the Conservative. Whether that policy is right or wrong may be doubtful. What is certain is that the people go gladly to hear them, because they feel and they talk about fresh and living issues."

The *Edinburgh Evening News* (Liberal), speaking of the contest which took place in Edinburgh, wrote on January 29, 1912: "Some of the finest orations of the election campaign come from these women. In the point of view of sincerity, rhetoric, eloquence, marshalling of a case . . . the ladies have it. . . . But it is well to counsel the ladies patience."

In connection with the East Nottingham campaign, the *Workers' Journal* of April 18, 1912, declared the attitude of the W.S.P.U. to be both wise and logical, and added that it had been tricked and deceived so often that it had lost that childlike faith in Liberal election pledges which characterizes so many working men.

The *Folkestone Herald*, speaking of the Hythe contest, wrote on June 8, 1912: "The W.S.P.U. have conducted a very successful open-air campaign during the past week, and



their speakers have had an excellent reception. They have received a very courteous hearing from the Liberal electors, who apparently realize that the Union's by-election policy is not inspired by any personal animus to Liberalism." The same paper reported the meetings of the National Union, the New Constitutional Society, and the Anti-Suffragists.

Perhaps the *Leicester Mail* more than any other paper managed to put the situation from the Suffragettes' point of view, when describing the election scenes which took place in that town in its issue of June 23, 1913. It said: "The market-place yesterday was turned into a breach of promise court. The Government was in the dock, on many charges of broken faith, and the Suffragettes, who are taking a very energetic part in the present election campaign, acted as counsel for the plaintiffs. Seldom has such a remarkable scene been witnessed in the market-place. The demonstration was of a most orderly and successful character." (1913 was the year in which the Manhood Suffrage Bill was withdrawn.<sup>1</sup>)

### References in the House

Speaking in the House on February 28, 1908, Mr. Snowden said: "On the Sunday before the South Leeds election, they (the Suffragettes) had a demonstration which was described to me by a man from Leeds, who said that he had taken part in every big demonstration in Leeds for the last thirty years, and had never before seen one equalling in numbers, enthusiasm and unanimity the demonstration the women had that Sunday afternoon. On the eve of the poll the women had a demonstration, and the local police calculated that 100,000 persons took part in it."

Speaking in the House on March 19, 1909, Sir Charles McLaren used these words: "I believe that these women have had very great influence in recent by-elections. It is difficult to say what will turn a vote, and what will not, but

<sup>1</sup> See p. 238.

I believe the fact of intelligent, eloquent, and attractive women . . . consistently and ruthlessly opposing every Government Candidate has had a very great effect on public opinion."

### Attitude of the Candidates

At first, the attitude of the Candidates, whatever their political faith, was usually one of scorn of the question involved, and of contempt of the idea that women could in any way affect the situation. In many cases this attitude was modified during the progress of the contest. Only in one case, apparently, did the successful Candidate sincerely advocate the cause from the first. This was at Colne Valley, July, 1907, where Mr. Victor Grayson, the Socialist Candidate, succeeded in ousting the Liberal. In the course of his election address Mr. Grayson said: "The placing of women constitutionally in the same category as infants, idiots, and peers does not impress me as either manly or just. If returned, I am prepared to give the most immediate and enthusiastic support to a measure according women the vote on the same terms as men." And after the declaration of the poll, he consented to address a meeting convened by the Suffragettes, when he reiterated his belief in the cause, and his determination to do what lay in his power "in season and out of season."

Some days before the declaration of the poll—*i.e.*, on July 4—the *Tribune* had announced in obvious alarm that it would not allow itself to be influenced against the cause of Women's Suffrage by the ill-conditioned action of the militants.

Examples of the other kind are as follows:

After the declaration of the poll at Bury St. Edmunds, August, 1907, when the successful Unionist Candidate, the Hon. W. Guinness, appeared to make the customary speech, and asked the question: "What has been the cause of this great and glorious victory?" he was met by the cry of "Votes for Women!" and three cheers for the Suffragettes, being called for, were vigorously responded to by the crowd. "No

doubt the ladies had something to do with it," the new Member was compelled to admit (see *Bury and Norwich Post*, August 27).

The wife of the successful Candidate at South Hereford (January, 1908) in an interview with a representative of the *Daily Telegraph*, published January 31, expressed great satisfaction at the assistance which had been afforded by the Suffragettes, and the following expression of opinion was elicited by the same means from Mr. Gooch, the successful Candidate at Peckham, and published on March 25: "Early in the campaign I declared myself in favour of giving votes to women on the same principle that votes are now given to men. A great feature of this election has been the activity of the supporters of Women's Suffrage."

After the declaration of the poll at Newcastle, September, 1908, Mr. Renwick, the successful Candidate, said: "May I say a word to the ladies? They have assisted me throughout the contest, and I must express my admiration for those who have addressed meetings on behalf of Women's Suffrage. They have taught us a lesson as to how to speak and conduct a campaign, and I am sure we all wish that they may realize their hopes." These remarks were punctuated by vigorous cheers. (*Newcastle Daily Journal*, September 26.)

At Cleveland, July, 1909, the Suffragettes took special pleasure in opposing Mr. Herbert Samuel, on his seeking re-election as Chancellor of the Duchy, in view of the fact that up to that time he had been Under-Secretary to the Home Department. At first he made light of their opposition, and referred to the "wild women from Westminster," but he soon found he had to answer a host of questions regarding the treatment meted out by his department to Suffragette prisoners. (This was shortly after the inauguration of the hunger strike.) Even *The Times*, in its issue of July 6, admitted that the women Suffragists had made a favourable impression upon the electorate, and that the miners in particular appeared

to have been thoroughly converted by the new propaganda. It even went so far as to admit that a Woman Suffrage Candidate pure and simple would have endangered Mr. Samuel's re-election. As it was, he was returned by a very much smaller majority than at the last contested election in 1900.

Mr. Gooch, the Liberal Candidate at Reading, November, 1913, had made no mention of the subject in his election address, but during the course of the election, a pronouncement of his, in which he proclaimed himself a convert to the cause, made its appearance in heavy type in the local Liberal papers (see *Reading Observer*, October 25). He was not returned.

### Manifestos

Among many others, the following quotations from manifestos may be given:

"Men of Huddersfield, don't be misled by Socialists, Suffragists, or Tories. Vote for Sherwell." (Huddersfield, November, 1906.)

"Working men, don't be fooled by Mrs. Pankhurst." "Suffragette and Tory lies nailed to the counter." (Attercliffe, May, 1909.)

At the Mid Devon election, the Liberal party, in anticipation of a victory, had had a mock memorial card printed: "In fond and loving memory of the Tariff Reformers and Suffragettes, who fell asleep at Mid Devon on January 17, 1908."

This was necessarily suppressed when the poll was declared.

### Pursuit of Cabinet Ministers

In some cases, the same individual was relentlessly pursued time after time, as he sought the support of first one and then another constituency. We may trace the course of events in the case of Colonel Seely, Mr. Churchill, and Mr. Masterman.

Colonel Seely first came into conflict with the Suffragettes in the General Election of 1910, when he was defeated at Abercromby, Liverpool. In March of the same year, he stood



for the Ilkeston division of Derbyshire, and though returned, it was by a majority considerably smaller than his predecessor's. On seeking re-election on his appointment as Minister for War in 1912, his majority was nearly 3,000 less than at the General Election of December, 1910.

In April, 1908, Mr. Churchill, on being appointed President of the Board of Trade, was compelled to seek re-election in his constituency of North-West Manchester. On this occasion, his former majority of 1,241 was turned into a minority of 429. Next day, the newspapers of both political parties, as we have seen, admitted that this defeat was largely due to the efforts of the Suffragettes. No time was lost in finding a "safe seat" for Mr. Churchill, but when he reached Dundee the following month, to enter upon another contest, he found the "hornets," as he described the Suffragettes, ready to welcome him. The *Referee* of May 3 said: "The women are doing wonderful election work, and not getting half the credit for it that they deserve. Our wayward Winnie does not under-estimate them as a fighting force." Mr. Churchill was of course returned. During this election, he was relentlessly pursued by Miss Maloney of the Women's Freedom League, and on one occasion his patience gave out, and he left her in possession of his meeting. It is worthy of note that the North-West Manchester constituency was again captured by the Liberals in the General Election of January, 1910, and once more it showed a large turn-over of votes in the by-election of August, 1912, when the Suffragettes were again present in full force.

In July, 1911, Mr. Masterman was unseated on petition at North-West Ham, and he did not seek re-election in that constituency, but at South-West Bethnal Green, later in the month. Here he found himself vigorously opposed by the Suffragettes, a leaflet entitled "What the Insurance Act does and does not do for women, fully explained," being scattered broadcast. The *Manchester Guardian* of July 29

observed: "The element that no one can calculate is the effect of the most efficient campaign of the Suffragettes, both militant and constitutional." On this occasion he was returned, though by a smaller majority than his predecessor's. In February, 1914, on being appointed Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, he was compelled to seek re-election, and found himself once more opposed by women. This time he was defeated by the narrow majority of 24. Three months passed, and he then put up for Ipswich, when a vacancy occurred there through the death of the Rev. Silvester Horne. Once more the Suffragettes were ready and waiting, and this time their campaign was undoubtedly strengthened by the presence of a "Cat and Mouse" prisoner, whom the authorities, for reasons of their own, refrained from rearresting just then. Mr. Masterman was defeated by a majority of 532, and since that time he has not reappeared in political life. During the last days of the contest Ipswich was like a besieged town, and when Mr. Lloyd George arrived on the scenes to support Mr. Masterman's candidature, he was escorted everywhere by a strong force of police.

### By-Election Incidents

As may be readily supposed, the reception accorded to the Suffragettes was sometimes far from flattering, to say the least of it. On the other hand, their campaign was often attended by unlooked-for manifestations of sympathy and good-will. Some few, among the many incidents of interest which might be cited, may be selected before closing this chapter.

At Jarrow (July, 1907), in spite of some opposition earlier in the contest, a procession of women, which assembled to make the round of the polling booths while the voting was in actual progress, was able to carry out its programme with entire success, although the police were conspicuously absent.

The Mid Devon election of January, 1908, was one of the

most exciting contests in which the W.S.P.U. took part, for party feeling ran very high, and when the poll came to be declared, it was found that the seat which had been held by the Liberals since its creation in 1885 had been captured by the Tories. When this result had been made known, the successful candidate had to be escorted home by a strong force of police. Then, with the cry, "Those women have done it!" the infuriated mob set upon Mrs. Pankhurst and another lady who was with her, and rolled them in the mud. The timely arrival of the police put an end to an ugly situation, but no arrests were made.

Regarding the Peckham contest of March, 1908, and the oft repeated statement that the new Member had been floated into the House on beer, Dr. Esler, of 4, Queen's Road, Peckham, wrote a letter on March 27 which appeared in the columns of the *Daily Telegraph*, in which he testified to the remarkable sobriety and toleration which had prevailed throughout the election. He concluded with these words: "In my opinion a high moral tone was imparted at the beginning by the presence on the Rye of the ladies who took part in the proceeding. Their dignified demeanour and cultured oratory made a profound impression, and I think this should not be overlooked when considering the result."

The *Daily Mail* of March 23, 1908, published an article on "The Witchery of Christabel," by An Enthusiast, giving an impression of the work done by the W.S.P.U. under her leadership at the same contest, in which the following passage occurs: "This girl orator and organizer, martyr and crusader, holds and sways her crowds by a very network of antithesis, and her rosy face is the index of her complexity. . . . Shall I speak of her logic? it is inexorable. . . . She has a good case, and relies on it. She is saturated with facts, and hecklers find themselves heckled, twitted, tripped, floored. . . . Look to it, Mr. Gawtrey, or the witchery of Christabel will do you in the eye."

Mrs. Pankhurst herself appeared on the scenes after her first imprisonment, and members of the Women's Freedom League organized a procession of ex-prisoners. A member of this League was threatened with prosecution under the Corrupt Practices Act, because Liberal voters were seen to hand her their colours and polling cards at the entrance to one of the booths. After the declaration of the poll, Mrs. Drummond was borne shoulder-high down the street, in the time-honoured manner of election-time, though this distinction had hitherto been reserved for members of the "sterner sex."

At the Newcastle election of the autumn of the same year, recently released prisoners again appeared. A procession was organized to welcome them, and the railway authorities, hearing of this, placed the entrance usually reserved for Royalty at their disposal, and scenes of great enthusiasm took place (see *North Mail* and *Newcastle Daily Chronicle*, September 21). During the progress of this same election, a local branch of the Amalgamated Society of Engineers forwarded two resolutions to the Government, one of which called for the enfranchisement of women during the Autumn Session, the other being expressed as follows: "That we approve of the methods adopted at this by-election by the Suffragists in opposing the Government Candidate" (*Daily Express*, September 24).

When the poll was declared, it was found that a great turn-over in votes, resulting in the loss of the seat to the Liberals, had taken place. The *Morning Post* had said on September 22: "The women Suffragists are undoubtedly influencing a good many against the Liberal cause."

The Bermondsey election of October, 1909, was rendered famous by the attempt on the part of two members of the Freedom League, Mrs. Chaplin and Miss Neilans, to render it null and void by destroying the ballot papers at one of the polling booths, this being a protest against the way in which the pickets who had been stationed at the door of the House



during sixteen weeks had been ignored. It was argued that only unconstitutional methods of agitation were possible. They were unsuccessful in their attempt, and a slight injury was inflicted on the eye of the polling clerk. Sentences of four and three months' imprisonment were inflicted on the offenders, women being rigorously excluded from the Court at the time of their trial. Miss Neilans entered on the hunger strike, and was fed by force. Both prisoners were released at the expiration of her sentence.

At the Cheltenham election of April, 1911, the W.S.P.U. sought (but without success) to induce the Liberal Candidate to secure a pledge from the Government that it would deal with the question, before throwing the weight of its influence on the side of Mr. Agg Gardner, a known supporter of the cause. The latter was returned by the narrow majority of four. The *Morning Post* of April 28, describing a mass meeting at the Town Hall, at which Miss Pankhurst was the chief speaker, said: "The chief point of interest in the meeting was the explicit statement that many Liberals have promised at this election to stand by the women in their fight."

Another well-known supporter was returned at the Hitchin election of November, 1911, in the person of Lord Robert Cecil, who in the *Times* of November 13 was reported to have said, in the course of an election speech, that Mr. Asquith's proposals with regard to the Manhood Suffrage Bill were merely an attempt to drown the demand for Women's Suffrage, and that "discreditable trickery" of that kind was not a fair way of dealing with any question.

The Reading campaign of November, 1913, was remarkable for the friendly attitude of the University students, a section of the community not usually distinguished for its restrained behaviour at times of popular excitement. The *Daily News* in its issue of November 10, 1913, when announcing the result of this contest, frankly admitted that the antagonism of the women was a contributory cause of the remarkable turn-

over of votes which took place. This was one constituency among many where the organizer was informed by the Liberals that they intended to vote against their own party in consequence of what they had heard. Numerous other instances might be cited, did space permit.

The Poplar election of February, 1914, is noticeable for the appearance on the scene of emissaries from the newly formed East London Federation of the Suffragettes, and an embarrassing circumstance was the presence of Miss Sylvia Pankhurst herself, as a "Cat and Mouse" prisoner. Like the "mouse" at Ipswich, she was not rearrested until afterwards.

The Leith election of February, 1914, took place just at the time when forcible feeding was being employed for the first time in a Scotch prison. Whether the hasty release of a prisoner, in a condition of collapse, and suffering from double pneumonia, had any effect on the result, may be open to question, but it is indisputable that the Liberal was rejected, a turnover of 1,800 votes being recorded.

(The figures in this chapter are taken from the *Liberal Year-Book* for 1915.)

## PART IV

### *THE STONE AGE : FORCIBLE FEEDING EMPLOYED*

(JUNE, 1909-DECEMBER, 1912)

1909

#### **Review of Past Events**

IN Part I of this book, some account has been given of the prolonged efforts which had been made since the middle of the nineteenth century to bring the question of women's emancipation into the political arena, when recourse was had to methods of a purely "constitutional" nature.

In Part II, the earlier manifestations of "militancy" have been described, and it has been shown how women who refused to take "no" for an answer in their efforts to secure a hearing of their case had been thrown into prison for the offence of "obstruction," and subjected to the kind of treatment which had called forth the protests referred to on p. 70.

It was inevitable that these events should be followed by more startling developments, unless those fighting for their freedom were willing to acknowledge defeat, and readers who have followed events thus far will readily perceive that such was not likely to be the case. It must be reiterated that the organization of mass meetings, of processions, and similar demonstrations, and of petitions on an enormous scale, had all alike proved useless in the matter of convincing the rulers of the country that the question must be dealt with. So war had been declared by the two-fold method of opposing the Government at by-elections and heckling Cabinet Ministers

in public. It had been ruled by the Courts, and embodied in Acts of Parliament, that in certain cases, women could not be regarded as "persons" (though where penalties were involved, there was no such limitation to the meaning of the word). Lastly, their claim to be regarded as subjects of the King had been set aside, for the right of petition in person, as provided by the Bill of Rights, was held not to apply to them. It was apparently with the definite intention of drawing the attention of the public to this injustice that the next deputation set forth.

### **Eighth Convention : Eleventh " Raid "**

On June 29, Mrs. Pankhurst, accompanied by Mrs. Saul Solomon and Miss Neligan (a pioneer of girls' education, then seventy-six years of age), and six other women, left Caxton Hall, where another Convention had been held, to present to Mr. Asquith the petition which had been drawn up, in which attention was drawn to the entirely constitutional nature of the demand, and to the fact that those presenting themselves felt the question to be so urgent that they could not accept the refusal which had been received a few days previously. The deputation was allowed to proceed as far as St. Stephen's entrance, where it was met by Inspector Scantlebury with a written refusal from Mr. Asquith to receive it. Thereupon Mrs. Pankhurst, with (as she afterwards explained) the express intention of cutting short the inevitable struggle with the police, deliberately committed a technical assault on another Inspector by striking him in the face. She and her companions were immediately put under arrest, and before the Square was finally cleared a fierce struggle took place, resulting in the arrest of 105 other women, who sallied forth at intervals from thirty different offices, which, as it afterwards transpired, had been hired for that night.

Many of these women were armed with stones, with which they made an attack on the windows of various Government



offices. Some of the stones were wrapped in paper, on which was inscribed a message explaining why these means were being adopted. In some cases, the missile employed was attached to a string, the other end of which was held fast, to insure that no injury to life or limb should inadvertently occur. These earliest manifestations of destructive militancy were indeed largely of a symbolic character, intended to typify the strength of the movement, which up to this point, and for some years more, was held in severe restraint. The leaders of the movement always maintained that each step taken was forced upon them by the Government, and it is undeniable that each display of militancy in the early days followed upon the ignoring or suppressing of constitutional methods of agitation, and that each fresh departure in this respect occurred when some action of the Government had apparently given the movement its quietus. It was nearly four years before the militancy which found expression in stone-throwing and the use of the hammer gave place to the far more serious developments following on the withdrawal of the long promised Reform Bill. Events must, however, be recorded in their proper sequence.

### **Questions in the House : Motions for Adjournment**

The situation was, even at this stage, sufficiently serious to demonstrate the accuracy of the forecasts which, as already chronicled, had been made in both Houses of Parliament by members gifted with greater insight than the majority. One of these champions of justice were indeed engaged, at the time these occurrences were taking place, in a wordy discussion with Mr. Gladstone and the Speaker as to who was responsible for the situation. Mr. Hugh Law went so far as to move an adjournment "in order to consider a matter of public importance, namely, the refusal of the Premier to receive a deputation on the subject of Women's Suffrage, and the consequent danger to the public peace." The Speaker

ruled that the matter could not be considered urgent, since it had been brought before the House for at least two years, while Mr. Gladstone averred that his knowledge of the matter was derived from the papers, and that he could not say what action it would be right or wrong for the police to take. Nevertheless, the following day he accepted full responsibility for their actions, and the Speaker said it was his (the Speaker's) duty to see that the interior of the House was guarded from any untoward interruption. Mr. Keir Hardie also moved the adjournment of the House that day to call attention to the action of the Metropolitan Police in forcibly preventing the ladies from entering St. Stephen's. Altogether, five times in the course of the year, this action was taken for reasons connected with the agitation. In the Press accounts of the events of the 29th, it was freely admitted that the Premier's mismanagement of the business was responsible for what had occurred, and many strongly worded protests were sent to him from various Suffrage Societies both at home and abroad, including some from Germany. He, however, stood firm, though compelled to admit in the House (July 8) that since his accession to the Premiership he had not received a deputation on the subject.

### **Picketing by Members of the Freedom League**

At this stage, members of the Freedom League sought to obtain the desired interview by means of a "peaceful picket." For a period of over sixteen weeks—*i.e.*, from July 5 to October 28, whenever the House was sitting (a total of 729 hours in all), whatever the weather might be, a little band of women was to be found, patiently awaiting an opportunity of personally handing a petition to the Premier, or of saying a few words which should bring home to him the urgency of the question. That opportunity, however, never came, and speculation was rife as to how Mr. Asquith managed to evade so much vigilance. A chapter of Mr. H. G. Wells' "New Macchiavelli" is devoted to this episode.

A petition was also sent to the King himself, urging upon him the right of petition as secured by the Bill of Rights, and pointing out that his Prime Minister's continued refusal to receive a deputation had produced a constitutional difficulty which could not be overcome. The King referred the matter to the Home Secretary, who accordingly received a deputation of eight, led by Mrs. Despard, but beyond emphasizing the unconstitutional nature of the Premier's attitude, nothing was achieved.

The Premier's official residence in Downing Street was also picketed, and during the month of July, on three separate occasions arrests were arbitrarily made, to the number of ten in all. On August 19, eight more arrests were made, Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Cobden Sanderson being among the number. Mr. Tim Healy undertook their defence at Bow Street, when sentences of 40s. or seven days' imprisonment were imposed, bail being, however, allowed, pending an appeal to the High Court. (See p. 145).

The Premier repeatedly had his attention drawn to the matter in the House, and on one occasion (July 26) he said: "I understand the ladies are engaged in the assertion of an alleged legal right, which is in train for decision by the Courts," and left it at that.

### **Trial of Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Haverfield**

We must now return to the case in question, the preliminary hearing of which took place before Sir Albert de Rutzen at Bow Street on June 30, when it was adjourned for a period of ten days on the request of Mr. Muskett, who conducted the prosecution. When the hearing was resumed, Lord Robert Cecil appeared on behalf of Mrs. Haverfield, who was placed in the dock with Mrs. Pankhurst, while the other defendants awaited their turn to occupy that position. Lord Robert made an eloquent speech, in which he quoted historical precedents in support of his contention that Mrs. Haverfield

and Mrs. Pankhurst (who conducted her own defence) had exercised an undoubted legal right in proceeding to Westminster to present a petition. On the other side, it was argued that the police were not aware that it was the object of the deputation to present a petition, and that the proper person to approach, had this been the case, would have been the Home Secretary. In his summing up, the magistrate, who was obviously embarrassed by the magnitude of the issues involved, while admitting the right of petition, pointed out that this right did not carry with it the correlative duty on the part of a Minister to receive it. With the remark that the practice of binding over had not had the desired effect of stopping the disturbances, he sentenced the two ladies to a fine of £5 or one month's imprisonment, but consented to state a case for a higher court, and meanwhile to admit them to bail.

With the exception of fourteen women arrested for stone-throwing or attempted rescue, who on the following Monday were tried and sentenced to four to six weeks' imprisonment, the charges against the other defendants, ninety-two in all, were also held over. We may here anticipate somewhat, and state that in point of fact they were allowed to drop altogether. For after the delay which necessarily took place, the authorities were sufficiently occupied in coping with fresh developments in the situation, and appear to have been only too thankful to let these delinquents slip out of their hands altogether.

### **Inauguration of the Hunger Strike : Mutiny in Holloway**

Meanwhile an event had occurred which was destined to have far-reaching effects. When Miss Wallace Dunlop reached Holloway, having been sentenced to a month's imprisonment for her method of giving publicity to Clause V. of the Bill of Rights, she applied for treatment in the First Division, on the grounds that her offence was of a political character.



This being refused, she adopted the hunger strike, and, as every effort to break down her determination not to let a morsel of food pass her lips proved ineffective, she was released after a fast of ninety-two hours in a state of complete exhaustion.

The fourteen prisoners sentenced for window-breaking, on reaching Holloway, and finding that they too were to be treated as common criminals, promptly applied themselves to the task of defying all authority. They declined to change into prison garb, to be examined by the prison doctor, or to be bound in any way by prison rules. They also broke their cell windows (which were so constructed as to admit no air and but little light), and in spite of the special punishments inflicted by the Visiting Magistrates, consisting in some cases of as much as ten days' solitary confinement, they also entered upon the hunger strike, with the result that within a few days they were all once more at liberty. It is no part of the purpose of this volume to enter into particulars of the sufferings endured by these and other prisoners, it is merely to record how step by step they fought, and with what result, against such odds as might have deterred the most stout-hearted among them from so desperate a venture.

### **Treatment of Prisoners Discussed in the House**

Charges made by the prisoners, which have never been disproved, were that they were confined in cells below the level of the ground, which were damp, dark, and verminous, which smelt of sewage, and were unprovided with any heating apparatus. These cells, known as punishment cells, were furnished merely with a plank bed with a wooden pillow, while a tree trunk clamped to the wall provided the only seat. The Suffragettes complained that they were handled with unnecessary violence by the wardresses, who pummelled them, pulled their hair, twisted their arms, etc. In some cases they were handcuffed for hours at a time, or confined

in straight jackets, or in padded cells, or "frog marched" to or from their cells. All these complaints were of course not made by one prisoner, but these conditions are alleged to have prevailed about this time in the various prisons in which Suffragettes were confined. No opportunity was ever provided for proving or disproving these allegations.

Questions were constantly asked in the House by Mr. Keir Hardie and others, on which occasions Mr. Gladstone defended himself as best he could, and even went so far on one of them (July 27) as to maintain that if other countries were more considerate in their treatment of prisoners guilty of political offences, then it was time they imitated the example of Great Britain. The condition of nervous irritability to which he was brought may, however, be gauged by his use of the following words on August 4, when, during the debate on the Consolidated Fund Appropriation Bill, he was severely attacked by several Members: "I do my best, but whatever I do in this matter is wrong. I am very sorry, but I have done my best, and I can do no more."

### Visiting Magistrates' Sentences

It will naturally not be supposed that the Suffragettes were the only ones to make complaints as to what went on in prison, but those who complained of them had the advantage of being supported by the Governor, the Visiting Magistrates, and the other officials responsible for maintaining prison discipline. The magistrates would visit the offenders in their cells, and solemnly sentence them to periods of solitary confinement, without any apparent regard to the fact that already any other kind of confinement was a physical impossibility, and that shortly all idea of any sort of confinement would have to be abandoned. Two prisoners (Miss Garnett and Mrs. Dove-Willcox), who were accused of biting and kicking the wardresses, had nevertheless to be released without having

been made to suffer any special punishment for these alleged offences. By the express order of the Home Secretary, police-court proceedings were immediately taken against them, fresh sentences of imprisonment being imposed for the latter offence. The accusation as to biting, which was indignantly denied, was not proved. On the return of the prisoners to Holloway, the hunger strike was resumed, with the result that but three days of the fresh sentence were served.

### **Disturbances at Meetings**

Disturbances at political meetings, where members of the Government were announced as speakers, were meanwhile taking place with increasing frequency. Every possible effort was made to exclude women from these meetings, and unheard-of expedients were resorted to in order to frustrate such endeavours. Thus in some cases women would lie for hours beforehand under a platform, or on the roof of a building, with the object of uttering their protest before the assembled audience. Men sympathizers also sought to keep the question before the public, and in many cases were severely handled by the infuriated stewards. This was notably the case at Mr. Lloyd George's famous Limehouse meeting (July 30), on which occasion several men received severe injuries. Thirteen women were also arrested on that day for attempting to force an entrance into the hall, and on being sent to prison carried on the fight begun by the window-smashers, and with the same result. Others went through the hunger strike at Liverpool, Manchester, Newcastle, and other places. In fact, from all over the country came reports of disturbances connected with the campaign, and of imprisonments incurred in consequence. In some cases, women who had been arrested by the police were released by a sympathetic crowd, as at Leigh (Lancs) on July 15, in others (for instance, at Edinburgh on July 17), the police themselves released their prey when the meeting was safely over. Sometimes the crowd turned

against the women, with the result that they underwent the most humiliating treatment, and sometimes were in imminent jeopardy of their lives. At Glasgow the following incident occurred. Four women were arrested in connection with a meeting addressed by Lord Crewe (August 20), and were released on bail on condition that they appeared the following morning at the police court at a certain hour. Having lost their way in the passages, they were a few minutes late, but those few minutes had sufficed for the bail to be escheated, and for warrants to be issued for the rearrest of the delinquents. It may be added that the warrants were never answered, and there the matter dropped.

### **Mr. Asquith's Meeting at Birmingham**

The events of this time are too numerous and varied to record in any detail. It must suffice to refer to the climax which was reached at Birmingham, when Mr. Asquith visited that city to deliver a speech on September 17 on the veto of the House of Lords. The city gave the appearance on this occasion of being in a state of siege, for barricades were erected everywhere the Prime Minister was expected to go, and on his arrival at the station, he was smuggled into the adjoining hotel in the luggage lift. (See *Birmingham Daily Mail* of the next day.) The extraordinary precautions taken to exclude Suffragettes from the Bingley Hall meeting itself were successful, but two of them, Mrs. Leigh and Miss Marsh, succeeded in reaching an adjoining roof, from which point of vantage they hurled slates and other missiles into the street below, and on to the roof of the hall where the meeting was being held. They were eventually dislodged with the assistance of a fire hose, and hurried off to the police station. The following day, Mrs. Leigh was sentenced to four months' and Miss Marsh to three months' hard labour, while sentences of two to six weeks' imprisonment were passed on eight other women arrested in the course of the day.



### Introduction of Forcible Feeding

We now enter upon a very painful stage of the history of the movement, of which it is very difficult to write, so hideous was the treatment meted out to the women who, rightly or wrongly, had adopted such means as have been described to advocate their cause.

On September 24 the Press announced that the expedient of feeding the prisoners by force had been adopted in the Birmingham gaol, and the *Daily News* of the following day added that after their first experience of the process, the prisoners "took their meals regularly," and so the hunger strike had "broken down." That this was not, however, the case became apparent when Mr. Keir Hardie asked questions on the subject in the House the following week. Day after day he pressed for answers to his questions, and was told that the Prison Commissioners, with the approval of the Home Secretary, had instructed the Medical Officers to apply such "ordinary medical treatment" as was necessary to prevent suicide from starvation (September 27). Sometimes the treatment was characterized as "ordinary hospital treatment," and the "progressive improvement" in health of those receiving it was reported (September 28, October 4). On one occasion (September 30) Mr. Gladstone angrily demanded what authority a Member had for saying that he had given instructions to the Medical Officers, and pointed out that it was their duty to attend to the health of the prisoners in their charge. Again, the next day he assured the House that he was "satisfied that everything had been done with the utmost gentleness possible in the circumstances, and the prisoners themselves had borne witness to the kindness of the officers."

As has already been said, it is no part of the object of this history to describe the sufferings endured by the women in prison. This new form of torture has been graphically de-

scribed by those who underwent it, and such accounts are to be found in many other books and pamphlets. The amazing fact has to be recorded that less than half a dozen Members of the House of Commons raised their voices in protest against this "horrible and beastly outrage," as one of them described the process, and that the nation as a whole permitted it to continue. A memorial was indeed signed by 116 medical practitioners, including Sir Victor Horsley, F.R.C.S., W. Hugh Fenton, M.D., M.A., C. Mansell-Moullin, M.D., F.R.C.S., Forbes Winslow, M.D., and Alexander Haig, M.D., F.R.C.P., and presented to Mr. Asquith, drawing attention to the dangers attending the process, and to its inhuman character. This memorial was referred to Sir Douglas Powell, who gave it as his opinion that the statements it contained were inaccurate and exaggerated, and that the process involved no special risk. He added that he assumed that the operation was carried on "by skilled nursing attendants, under careful medical observation and control," one of which conditions clearly could not prevail in Holloway, where no trained nurses are employed.

In a letter which appeared in the *Observer* of October 3, Dr. Forbes Ross said that he had no particular feeling for the Suffragettes, but that as a medical man he considered forcible feeding by the methods employed to be an "act of brutality beyond common endurance." Mr. W. A. Davidson, M.D., F.R.C.S., characterized it as a "most cruel and brutal procedure."

The *British Medical Journal* of October 2, while severely condemning the Suffragettes, described the operation as "one requiring a certain amount of dexterity, and great care and gentleness," while in its issue of the following week it protested in the strongest terms against the "contemptible pusillanimity" of the Home Secretary in seeking to shelter himself behind his subordinates, the Medical Officers.

The *British Journal of Nursing* of October 9, discussing the

question as to when it was right to employ the process, said: "First and foremost it should be employed for the benefit of the patient, and in the case of an adult, only when his or her consent has been obtained. In all our relations with our patients, their sacred right to determine what shall or shall not be done to their own bodies is secured to them." It added a high tribute to the moral and physical courage of the women who were willing to endure ignominy, prison, and even death itself, to secure elementary human rights for themselves and their sisters.

The daily Press meanwhile defended the action of the authorities, though two journalists, Mr. Henry Nevinston and Mr. H. N. Brailsford, resigned their posts on the staff of the *Daily News*, announcing publicly that their reason for so doing was the hypocritical attitude on the subject adopted by that paper (*Times*, October 5). Many Liberals also resigned official positions on various Liberal organizations.

The practice, however, continued, and not only were the Birmingham prisoners who had been sentenced for trivial offences subjected to it, but prisoners who had been released before the introduction of the "brutal procedure" were in several cases rearrested on the charge of having broken their cell windows while in prison, though they had already been punished at the time for such acts of insubordination. The damage in all cases was most trivial, in one as low as 6d., yet fresh sentences were inflicted.

### **Disturbances Continue All Over the Country**

If it was the object of the authorities to break down the movement by the use of this expedient, and to deter those for whom prison had hitherto had no terrors from taking part in the agitation, they were doomed to disappointment, for disturbances continued all over the country with unabated vigour. Considering the passionate feelings aroused by the treatment of prisoners, the wonder is that subsequent protests

took the mild form they did, for it was obvious that like treatment would be meted out to any offender, if it was at all possible to inflict it, whatever her offence might be, provided of course that the systematic resistance to prison discipline now inaugurated were persisted in. Strange as it may seem in the retrospect, women still performed "symbolic acts" of revolt, such as throwing stones at a Minister's motor-car, or using an axe against the wooden barriers erected to protect Cabinet Ministers' meetings, meetings which still continued to be interrupted in the now familiar manner. Thus, at Newcastle on October 11, Lady Constance Lytton, Mrs. H. N. Brailsford, and several others were arrested in connection with disturbances occurring in that city when Mr. Lloyd George paid it a visit. The authorities were apparently loath to convict these two ladies, and while the other defendants were sentenced to two to four weeks' imprisonment, mostly with hard labour, they were ordered to be bound over, and on refusing, were sentenced to ordinary imprisonment. Again, when forcible feeding was employed against the others, these two were released "on medical grounds," though Mrs. Brailsford protested that she was perfectly sound. How Lady Constance put the reasons given for her release to the test will be related in due course.

Before the end of the year, scores of women had undergone forcible feeding in various prisons all over the country. The practice was not adopted in Scotland, for some women who were arrested and sentenced in connection with disturbances at Dundee at the time of a visit from Mr. Churchill were released after hunger-striking.

### **Hose-Pipe Incident at Manchester**

At the Strangeways gaol, Manchester, an incident occurred which attracted a considerable amount of interest. Miss Emily Wilding Davison, who, with three others, had been sentenced to a month's hard labour on October 21, had, after



several applications of the process of forcible feeding, barricaded herself in her cell, and successfully resisted every effort made to effect an entry. The Visiting Committee was sitting at the time, and a resolution was unanimously passed by this body, directing the officers to use the hose-pipe on the recalcitrant prisoner. Mr. Gladstone admitted in the House (November 1) that in so doing they had been guilty of a grave error of judgment, but his account of the incident differed materially from that given by Miss Davison herself, who was immediately released by his order.

Early the following year, Miss Davison took action against the J.P.s responsible for the outrage, but though judgment was given in her favour, the facts that her own conduct had led up to the assault, that she had not served her sentence, and that the incident had supplied copy for a "vivacious and entertaining account in the Press" (to quote Judge Parry, before whom the case was heard in the Manchester County Court), were duly taken into account, and the damages were assessed at 40s. The defendants had, however, to pay the costs on the higher scale.

Two other events which occurred towards the end of this year may just be mentioned. One was the protest made by two Suffragettes at the Guildhall on the occasion of the Lord Mayor's feast, they having gained access earlier in the day, disguised as charwomen, and the other was the assault on Mr. Churchill on his arrival at Bristol to speak at the Colston Hall on November 13. Sentences of one month's imprisonment were inflicted in all three cases, the charge of assault having been withdrawn in the case of Miss Teresa Garnett, Mr. Churchill's assailant, and one of "disturbing the peace" having been substituted. Unheard-of precautions were taken, and much money was expended, to insure that this Minister's Lancashire tour should not be marred by any untoward occurrences, but with indifferent success, for several arrests took place in the various towns visited.

### Another Albert Hall Meeting

While these events were occurring in the provinces, showing in an unmistakable manner the mettle of the women supporting the militant movement, evidence was not wanting as to the support it was receiving in other ways from an ever increasing section of the community. On October 7, another Albert Hall meeting took place, when, amid scenes of great enthusiasm, a sum of £2,300 was subscribed to the funds of the W.S.P.U., and, the £50,000 originally asked for being then subscribed, an appeal was made to build up a sum of £100,000.

### Mrs. Pankhurst's Appeal Case

On December 1, the case of Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Haverfield duly came before the Divisional Court. The latter was again defended by Lord Robert Cecil, who argued that the members of the deputation were exercising an undoubted right, and one which had expressly been guaranteed by that very Act of Charles II. under which it had been sought to prosecute them, and also by the Bill of Rights. It would be tedious to go into the arguments adduced by the learned Lord in support of this contention. Suffice it to state that the Lord Chief Justice entirely agreed that the right of presenting a petition clearly existed, but gave it as his opinion that if the women had confined themselves to presenting a petition, Mr. Asquith would not have refused to receive it, but that it was natural he should refuse to receive a deputation, seeing what had occurred on previous occasions.<sup>1</sup> Justices Channell and Coleridge concurred, and the Police Court decision was upheld, though as already narrated, the case against the ninety-two co-defendants was dropped. Mrs. Pankhurst's and Mrs. Haverfield's fines were anonymously paid, though without their knowledge or consent (they having stoutly refused to pay them themselves), and the majesty of the law was thus duly vindicated.

<sup>1</sup> See pp. 130, 150.

### **Mrs. Leigh's Action for Damages**

On December 9 Mrs. Leigh brought an action for damages against the Home Secretary and the Governor and Doctor (Captain Green and Dr. Helby) of Winson Green Gaol, for having caused her to be fed by force, without her consent, and against her determined opposition and resistance. She had been released on October 30, in an exhausted condition, having served a little more than a quarter of her sentence, as, in spite of the "progressive improvement in health" reported by Mr. Gladstone in the House, it had been found impossible to keep her alive any longer. Applications made by herself and others, to see representatives of a firm of solicitors, while still undergoing sentence, had been refused first on one pretext and then on another, for Mr. Gladstone said on September 29 that he had not received an application from the prisoner herself, and that he did not think that the firm in question was acting on her behalf, and, on October 27, that the reason given for the application did not bring the case within the prison rules, and further, that Mrs. Leigh was shortly to be released.

At the hearing before the Lord Chief Justice (Lord Alverstone) several eminent medical men, who had signed a memorial addressed to the Prime Minister on the subject, testified to the dangers of the process and to its ineffectiveness, evidence of which latter point was to be found in the fact that Mrs. Leigh was then at liberty. It was pointed out that no rule or regulation justified its use, that it was an unjustifiable assault, or, in the words of Mr. Duke, K.C., who appeared on Mrs. Leigh's behalf, "an outrageous interference with the freedom of the individual." On the other hand, Sir R. Douglas Powell said that he had never known evil consequences to result from the process, and gave it as his opinion that he should regard it as proof of insanity if a sane person refused food. The

Judge practically decided the case himself by stating that when a prisoner hunger struck, the authorities of the prison were entitled to take any step necessary to preserve life, and the only point which he submitted to the jury was whether the prison officials did what was reasonably necessary under the conditions, a point which the jury found no difficulty in deciding without leaving the box. A verdict was accordingly given for the defendants, and it was by these means that the legality of the practice was established, for whenever in the five succeeding years in which (with certain interludes) it was employed against Suffragettes, the case of *Leigh v. Gladstone* could always be cited. In the course of the hearing it was openly acknowledged by the Attorney-General that the Home Secretary was responsible for the matter.

### **Eighth Albert Hall Meeting**

The last event of any importance for the year 1909 was another great demonstration in the Albert Hall convened by the W.S.P.U. on December 9. Primarily intended as a meeting of welcome to Mrs. Pankhurst on her return from America, it was also the occasion of a demonstration to Mrs. Leigh after her ten weeks' imprisonment at Birmingham, and of indignant protests at the denial of the right of petition, and of the right of a prisoner to decide whether or no an operation should be performed on her. In a fighting speech, Miss Christabel Pankhurst declared war on the Government in the coming General Election, and a resolution, couched in almost (but not quite) the identical words used by Mr. Asquith in reference to the House of Lords, was passed with much enthusiasm. A special campaign fund of £2,000 was guaranteed.

### **Mr. Asquith's Second Pledge**

The very next day, at a meeting convened by the National Liberal Federation at the Albert Hall, Mr. Asquith made the following declaration: "Nearly two years ago I declared on



behalf of the present Government that in the event of our bringing in a Reform Bill, we should make the insertion of a Suffragist Amendment an open question for the House of Commons to decide. . . . Our friends and fellow workers of the Women's Liberal Federation have asked me to say that my declaration survives the expiring Parliament, and will hold good in its successor (cheers), and that their cause, so far as the Government is concerned, shall be no worse off in the new Parliament than it would have been in the old. I have no hesitation in acceding to that request. . . . The Government . . . has no disposition or desire to burke this question. It is clearly one on which a new House of Commons ought to be given the opportunity to express its views" (*Times*, December 11).

### **The "Common Cause" and the "Vote"**

The year 1909 saw the inauguration of two more periodicals whose columns were devoted to a record of the progress of the movement. In April the first number of the *Common Cause*, the official organ of the National Union, made its appearance, and in October the Freedom League issued the first number of the *Vote*. Both papers have up to the present time (January, 1917) appeared regularly every week, even during the two and a half years of war, which period has been responsible for the failure of so many an enterprise.

## **1910**

### **Mrs. Despard's Appeal Case**

Early in the new year, the Freedom League appealed against the sentences imposed in August, 1909, on eight of their number at Bow Street Police Court. The case was heard by the Lord Chief Justice on January 14, and the decision of the magistrate was upheld, the appeal being dismissed with costs. The fines

of six of the ladies, including Mrs. Despard and Mrs. Cobden Sanderson, were paid without their knowledge and against their wishes, and the other two were rearrested a month later, and detained at Holloway for an hour and a half only, no reason being given for the proceeding. Thus the majesty of the law was once more vindicated.

### **The Fight Continues**

The early months of the year saw no abatement of the fight. Two Suffragettes, Miss Selina Martin and Miss Leslie Hall, were indeed carrying on a grim fight in Walton Gaol, Liverpool, where they were undergoing imprisonment as the result of having disguised themselves as coster girls, and succeeded in getting near Mr. Asquith on the occasion of his visit to that city on December 21, when one of them contemptuously tossed an empty bottle into a car from which he had just alighted. Bail was refused by the magistrate before whom these two were brought, and while prisoners on remand, they were subjected to forcible feeding, were kept in handcuffs fastened behind the back for many hours together, were beaten and frog-marched by the wardresses, and subjected to other indignities. Their statement that such was the treatment meted out to them was never disproved, though it was denied at the time by the Home Secretary. They made no secret of the defiant attitude they had adopted in prison. They were both released before the expiration of their sentences.

### **"Jane Warton" at Liverpool**

Exasperated by the thought of what these prisoners and others were enduring, Lady Constance Lytton, in spite of her delicate physique, determined to make a protest. Disguised as a working woman, and accompanied by Mrs. Baines and others, she led a procession to the gates of the gaol, and after telling the crowd of what was taking place within the walls, called upon it to support her in demanding the release of the

prisoners. She was immediately arrested, and sentenced the next day, January 15, to fourteen days' hard labour. The story of how she assumed the name of Jane Warton, and of how she was believed to be a seamstress, and as such was subjected to forcible feeding, without any medical examination, being treated with contumely and brutality by the prison doctor, and of how, her identity becoming known, she was hurriedly discharged, has been movingly and graphically told in Lady Constance Lytton's own book, "Prisons and Prisoners." On her release, she sent a careful statement to Mr. Gladstone, asserting that the forcible feeding had been performed without proper care, and with unnecessary cruelty. An "inquiry" was held to investigate the matter, which resulted in the usual whitewashing of the officials concerned.

### **The General Election of January, 1910**

These events occurred during the progress of a General Election, precipitated by the Lords' rejection of Mr. Lloyd George's budget of 1909. The Liberal Party went to the country with promises of the taxation of land values, the abolition of the power of veto of the Lords, Home Rule for Ireland, Disestablishment of the Church of Wales, and other measures. Women's Suffrage was not directly mentioned, but, as already related, the Premier had given a very definite pledge on the subject in the previous December (see p. 144).

The Liberals were returned to power, but with a greatly reduced majority. Mr. Asquith was now dependent on the Labour and Irish vote, the majority of all three parties over the Unionists having been reduced to 124, as compared with 354 in the previous Parliament. The W.S.P.U. claimed to have had something to do with this result, for in forty constituencies they marshalled their forces against the Government nominee. In eighteen of these the seat was wrested from the Liberals, and in almost every other case their majority was reduced. A complete list of these constituencies is given

in "Votes for Women," Vol. III., but no attempt is made here to analyze the results as in the case of by-elections. It was claimed that a poster illustrating the process of forcible feeding, which was widely distributed, was not without its effect. The National Union succeeded in securing 300,000 voters' signatures in favour of the principle of Women's Enfranchisement.

### **The Truce of 1910**

At the conclusion of the contest, the W.S.P.U., being advised that the Government had the intention of giving way on the subject, but that it did not wish to appear to give in on account of militancy, proclaimed a truce to hostilities. This truce, which, as we shall see, lasted for nine months, was also observed by the Freedom League.

### **Formation of the Conciliation Committee**

The next day, February 15, the newly elected House met. There had been, as we have seen, no mention of the subject in the King's Speech, and private Members were unsuccessful in the ballot. Forces were, however, at work which resulted in the formation of a Conciliation Committee, which, as its name implies, had as its object the uniting of all sections of opinion favourable to the broad principle of Women's Enfranchisement, with a view to drafting a Bill which would be acceptable to all. A Committee of Parliamentary supporters of Women's Suffrage had existed since 1887, when it was inaugurated under the influence of Miss Lydia Becker. It was strictly non-party, but had been allowed to lapse since 1906, when a Committee of Liberals had been formed, whose efforts resulted in bringing forward Mr. Howard's Bill in 1909. So the Conciliation Committee represented a fresh departure. As may be supposed, it was no light task which Mr. Brailsford as Secretary, and Lord Lytton as Chairman, undertook. However, they persevered in their efforts, and



were successful in getting together fifty-four members, twenty-five of whom were Liberals, seventeen Unionists, while six members were contributed by both the Irish and Labour parties. This Committee set to work to draft a Bill which should be moderate enough to find favour with the Unionists on the one hand, and on the other should not increase the power of the propertied classes, particularly in the matter of plural voting.

A Bill was eventually drawn up which proposed to give the vote to Women Occupiers and Women Householders—*i.e.*, to those women who already possessed the Municipal Franchise, which, as will be remembered, was granted in 1869. Women Owners, Lodgers, and University Graduates were indeed excluded, but as they represented a relatively small number compared with the other two classes, all the Suffrage Societies agreed to endorse the Bill, which was moreover backed by a large amount of support in the country. Careful inquiries conducted by the leaders of working women's organizations revealed the fact that the percentage of working women coming under the Bill would be between 82 and 91.

### **Another Albert Hall Meeting**

On March 18 another great meeting took place at the Albert Hall, when Miss Christabel Pankhurst declared that whatever the future might hold in the way of suffering, members of the Union were absolutely prepared to meet it. Medals were presented to those who had undergone imprisonment since the last meeting, and a resolution to the effect that the enfranchisement of women was more fundamental and more essential to popular government than the reform of the House of Lords, was carried with four dissentients. Mr. Castberg, ex-Minister of Justice from Norway, gave an account of the twenty-four years' struggle in Norway, which had been crowned with success the previous year.

### **Death of King Edward VII. : First Reading of the Conciliation Bill**

The lamented death of His Majesty King Edward VII. on May 6 produced a general disposition to compromise on all controversial issues, and thus improved the prospects of a solution of the question on peaceful lines.

Early in the following month (June 14) the First Reading of the Conciliation Bill took place, and it was carried without a division after a short debate. It was introduced by Mr. Shackleton, Labour Member for Clitheroe, Lancs, and Mr. F. E. Smith declared his intention of offering it "implacable resistance."

An attempt was immediately made to extract a promise from the Prime Minister for facilities for the later stages of the Bill. The answer was not immediately forthcoming, and during the interval there were many indications of popular support.

### **Memorials to the Prime Minister**

At this period, Mr. Asquith was the recipient of various memorials in support of the Bill. One of these was signed by 300 members of the medical profession, the signatures being collected in less than three days, while others insisting on the urgency of the question were received from distinguished authors and writers, from dignitaries of the Church, well-known educationalists, social workers, actors and actresses, musicians, and many others.

The Women's Liberal Federation sent a request to Mr. Asquith for an interview, to which request he acceded, also signifying his willingness to see representatives of the National Union.

### **Mr. Asquith Receives Two Deputations**

Thus, for the first time since he had become Prime Minister, Mr. Asquith came face to face with a deputation of women

Suffragists. The interview took place on June 21, and Mrs. Fawcett, on behalf of the National Union, and Lady McLaren, on behalf of the 670 branches of the Women's Liberal Federation, put their cases with "lucidity and persuasiveness," to quote Mr. Asquith's phrase. His reply was, however, very guarded, for he pointed out that it was improbable that any Government could make itself responsible for a Woman's Suffrage measure, and admitted that this was a great hardship. He quite agreed that the new House ought to have an opportunity of expressing an opinion on the subject, and said that he would consult his colleagues in the Cabinet, the majority of whom were in favour of the principle, and that their decision would be made known in the House. He admitted that the question was exciting an ever increasing amount of interest and even passion in the country.

A similar reply was given a few days later to a deputation of Anti-Suffragists, which also had an audience with the Premier, but in this case he was able to assure the members of the deputation that as far as he personally was concerned, they were preaching to the converted.

### **Another Great Procession : Another Albert Hall Meeting**

Meanwhile the W.S.P.U. had been busy organizing another great demonstration in London in favour of the Bill, which took place on Saturday, June 18. A vast crowd of women, including members of various societies besides the W.S.P.U., and a considerable body of men, formed up on the Embankment and marched four abreast to the Albert Hall. Estimates as to the number who took part differed, but some idea of the scale on which the procession was planned may be gained from the facts that it took an hour and a half to pass a given point, and that it stretched from St. James' palace, up St. James' Street, along Piccadilly and Knightsbridge to the Albert Hall, which building proved incapable of accommodating all who sought admission. Among the processionists

were 617 women carrying staves with broad arrows, each representing an imprisonment, which in eighty cases had been accompanied by the dangers and horrors of the hunger strike, entered on as a protest against injustice. There were also representatives from various countries and colonies beyond the seas, a contingent of 800 graduates in gorgeous academic robes, another of nurses in their familiar garb, while women artists, musicians, gymnasts, shop assistants, stenographers, and members of other professions and occupations too numerous to mention, passed by in serried ranks, while the air was filled, to quote the *Daily Telegraph*, with the music of forty bands, and 700 banners of all colours, sizes, and designs floated in the summer breeze. The *Daily News* devoted much space to a description of the pageant, and remarked in its leading article: "The demand of women for the vote can be silenced only by being satisfied."

"God befriend us as our cause is just," was the motto which greeted the great audience which assembled in the Albert Hall, and a note of confidence and victory was struck by all the speakers, among whom was Lord Lytton, the Chairman of the Committee, whose labours, as was confidently expected, would shortly be rewarded by complete success. A sum of £5,000 was added to the funds of the Union that evening, amid scenes of unbounded enthusiasm.

Thus, amid demonstrations of joy, and anticipated fruition of hopes so long deferred, the summer months passed, the truce being faithfully adhered to by all.

### **Second Reading of the Conciliation Bill**

Meanwhile the promoters of the Conciliation Bill had succeeded in securing two days for the Second Reading debate, which accordingly took place on July 11 and 12. In all, thirty-nine speeches were delivered, both supporters and opponents of the measure being drawn from all parties, with the one exception that no Labour Member spoke against it.



This fact sufficiently accounts for the bewildering number of points of view expressed, of which it is only possible to give the briefest summary.

The Bill, as explained by its sponsor, Mr. Shackleton, was intended to enfranchise about a million women, of whom 90 per cent., it was calculated, would be householders, and would be drawn from all classes. He referred to the progress made by women in this country, and to the example afforded by other countries in the matter of enfranchisement, and pointed out that the House was "short of work."

Reference to the militant movement was made by comparatively few speakers, and by those few in terms of deprecation. Sir John Rolleston, however, was of opinion that it had raised the question to the position it then held, while Lord Hugh Cecil prophesied the continued growth of the movement, and Mr. Walter McLaren went so far as to warn the House of the probability of an outbreak of an agitation such as the country had never seen, if the question were not dealt with.

The usual arguments against Women's Suffrage, in any form, were duly recapitulated, among which the following may be cited:

Women were women (Mr. Asquith and several others).

Their enfranchisement would not be for the good of themselves or of the country (Mr. Brassey).

They already occupied a preferential position (Mr. F. E. Smith).

Their emancipation would be the death blow to chivalry (Mr. Annan Bryce).

Such a change would ultimately lead to women having seats in the House and in the Cabinet (Mr. Butcher).

The balance of power would eventually be in their hands, without the physical force necessary to enforce their decisions (Mr. Asquith).

They were emotional and unstable (Mr. Mills).

It was their proper function to maintain the mental and moral fitness of men (Mr. Mills).

They were especially unfitted to decide questions involving the peace of the country (Mr. F. E. Smith).

Mr. Butcher asked: Why make such a fundamental change, when the best services of women could be obtained without?

Mr. F. E. Smith was not convinced that the majority of women did want the vote, but added that if he were so convinced, it would not influence him.

Mr. Walter Long said he might be influenced if it could be proved that women suffered from their lack of representation, but that even then he would be opposed to their emancipation.

Mr. Haviland Burke was of opinion that the energy and money spent on agitating for the Bill would have been much better expended in securing emancipation from injustice.

Mr. Henry deplored the use of Parliamentary time in discussing the question, and was of opinion that the Shops Bill would have been better for women.

Other opinions which may conveniently be arranged in pairs are as follows:

(a) Ameliorations of the condition of women had already taken place (Mr. Guinness).

(b) Their whole status would be altered (Mr. Lyell).

(a) Women were not fit to exercise the franchise (Mr. Kirkwood).

(b) Women were too good to be dragged into the political mire (Earl Ronaldshay).

(a) The majority of them did not want the change (Mr. Annan Bryce).

(b) Their views were of no account (Mr. Mills).

(a) They could find sufficient scope for their activities in municipal work (Mr. F. E. Smith).

(b) Women anti-Suffragists were "purchasing by the garulities of the day the silence of a lifetime" (Mr. Arnold Ward).

(a) Force was the ultimate appeal (Mr. Asquith).

(b) To yield now would constitute a precedent for yielding to force (Mr. Guinness).

And against this particular Bill it was argued:

That it was undemocratic (Mr. Baker).

That it must be followed by a more extensive measure (Mr. Chamberlain).

That it would "dish" a larger measure for many years to come (Mr. Harwood).

That married women (the "cream of their sex") were almost entirely excluded (Mr. Guinness).

That independence would be extended to married women (Mr. Henry).

So much for the opponents of the Bill. It will be noticed that many of these "arguments" were expressions of personal opinion, and incapable of proof one way or the other, and that several were mutually contradictory. Only one name has been cited in each case, but there was much repetition.

The best case against the Bill was undoubtedly made by Mr. F. E. Smith, who moved that it should be read three months later. He admitted that powerful arguments could be adduced on the other side, and did his best to demolish them in a serious and able speech. The contributions of three leading members of the Government are referred to later.

Among the speeches made by supporters of the Bill, special mention may be made of the contributions by four of their number.

Mr. Goulding, who in common with many other speakers on this side, referred to the immense change in the position of women which the last half century had witnessed, gave facts and figures showing how men had failed to legislate properly for women in such questions as payment for work, divorce, and other matters.

Mr. Keir Hardie gave Mr. Booth's figures, showing how in London at least, over half the Women Occupiers were engaged

in work outside their own homes, and that these were drawn from all classes. He pointed out that the movement had reached a stage when opposition was bound to be offered to whichever party was in power, until the question was settled, and warned the House of the danger of prolonging the dispute.

Mr. Snowden, who spoke at the end of the second day's debate, declared himself to be an Adult Suffragist, but as the Bill under consideration was the only one which united the various sections of opinion in favour of the principle, he was for that reason in favour of it. He also gave figures showing what proportion of Women Occupiers were working women, how small was the number of possible faggot votes, and so on.

It was left to Mr. Balfour to advance the philosophic and practical democratic argument, when he pointed out that democracy was *Government by consent*, and that when women had come to feel that they suffered under a disability, it was the business of Parliament to find a remedy. He referred to the large increase of economically independent women, and to the share which women, at men's invitation, had come to take in politics, as two of the many changes society had undergone in recent times, and which had to be reckoned with. If men were in danger in consequence of these changed conditions, his advice was that they should "orientalize the whole structure, and put (women) under lock and key." Lord Haldane also spoke to much the same effect.

The chief point of interest, however, from the political and historical point of view lay in the attitude of prominent members of the Government. Not only did Mr. Asquith speak and vote against the Bill, as was indeed expected, for he had never made any secret of his hostility, but Mr. Lloyd George, who had loudly professed his friendship for the cause, and Mr. Churchill, who had given it to be understood that he would support the Bill, did likewise. Mr. Lloyd George based his opposition chiefly on the Speaker's ruling that the Bill could not be amended in Committee. He wished to see



the important question discussed by a full House, when untrammelled by other business. Mr. Churchill scored a distinct point from the party point of view, in arguing that the Bill might make the creation of faggot votes a possibility, a possibility which the promoters had indeed not overlooked, and which they were careful to exclude in framing the Bill of the following year.

The opposition of this powerful triumvirate, and of lesser luminaries of the Government benches, did not, however, prevent the passing of the Second Reading by the substantial majority of 109 (Ayes 299, Noes 190).<sup>1</sup> This majority was greater than that recorded for the famous Budget of that year (93), or for the Veto Resolutions (103).

Although other "friends" of the movement besides Mr. Lloyd George went into the Opposition lobby, there was probably some good reason for the opinion expressed by Sir W. Nugent, among others, that among supporters of the Bill were to be found some who thus recorded a "pious opinion," trusting to the Premier to prevent the Bill from becoming law.

The Bill was by a second vote then referred to a Committee of the whole House, the Ayes numbering 320, and the Noes 175. Majority 145 (Official Reports, Col. 41, *et seq.*, Vol. 19.)

The *Nation* of July 16 published the following analysis of the polling:

	<i>Second Reading.</i>		<i>Committee of the Whole House.</i>	
	For.	Against.	For.	Against.
Liberal	161	60	124	101
Unionist	87	113	176	29
Labour	31	2	5	26
Nationalist	20	14	15	19
Total	299	189 <sup>1</sup>	320	175

There were also 24 pairs.

<sup>1</sup> The Official Report gives this figure as 190, but 189 appears to be correct.

### **Members Press for Facilities**

Some uncertainty seems to have existed among Members as to the precise meaning of their votes regarding the latter point, but the fact that leading Members of the Government voted solidly for this course, irrespective of the side they took in the debate, is not without significance. When in the interval which occurred before the House adjourned the Government was urged to give facilities, Mr. Asquith pointed to this vote as conclusive proof that the House did not wish for further progress. It was in vain that Lord Hugh Cecil, Mr. Snowden, and others urged that voting in favour of referring the Bill to a Committee of the whole House had not been understood by some Members to be tantamount to stopping further progress; that the debate itself had been no academic discussion, but had had reference, as Mr. Lloyd George had specially insisted, to this special measure; that like the Royal Declaration Bill, it had been passed by a large majority; that it was strongly supported in the country; and that the Government had no right to use the power of the House when convenient to its purpose, and at other times to flout the opinion it recorded. All was in vain. The House adjourned at the end of July without any understanding having been arrived at.

Suffragists had not, however, given up hope that other counsels would prevail. The truce was still faithfully observed, propaganda work had been going on with great vigour throughout the summer, and preparations were being made for yet another great demonstration.

### **Another Great Demonstration in Hyde Park**

On July 23, the anniversary of the day in 1867 on which the Hyde Park railings were pulled down by those who were then demanding their inclusion in the franchise, the W.S.P.U. organized yet another great demonstration in the Park, which,

according to the *Manchester Guardian*, was in mere size the most momentous thing of the kind London had seen. The correspondent of this paper further remarked: "It takes something important to keep half a million people quiet. Half a million is of course a descriptive phrase. No one could even begin to estimate the extent of the crowd"; and other papers commented on the beauty of the demonstration and the skilful organization which lay behind it. So great were the numbers that, by request of the police, two processions were formed, which made their way from the east and west respectively, and poured into the Park at the Marble Arch and Hyde Park Corner. A space of half a square mile was cleared, and forty platforms were erected, from which speeches were made to the assembled multitude, and from which, at a given signal, a resolution calling upon the Government to provide facilities for the Bill, was simultaneously put, and carried with but few dissentients.

### **Meetings in the Provinces : Support in the Country**

Great meetings also took place in Bristol, Liverpool, Nottingham, Manchester, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Dublin, and numerous other provincial centres, but space does not permit of any details of these demonstrations.

Another significant matter was the passing of resolutions by a large number of Town and City Councils, urging the Government to grant facilities to the Conciliation Bill (see p. 171). Numerous Trade and Labour Councils, and Trades Unions and Federations, did likewise. Indeed, had the Government seen fit to depart from its attitude of hostility, and to afford the necessary facilities, the measure would undoubtedly have come in on a great wave of popular support.

### **Two More Albert Hall Meetings**

The great constitutional campaign terminated in two gigantic meetings at the Albert Hall. One was organized by the W.S.P.U., and took place on November 10, when Mr. Zangwill made an eloquent and witty speech, and a resolution was passed (with two dissentients) calling upon the Government to withdraw its veto on the Bill. It was clearly indicated that if this were not done, a renewal of hostilities would occur.

Two days later, another great meeting took place in the same hall, under the auspices of the National Union and fourteen other societies. Altogether, since the Second Reading debate and before the reopening of Parliament, it was calculated that the number of meetings held on behalf of Women's Suffrage was upwards of 4,220, being greater, both in size and number, than the political meetings held on all other subjects combined. (Letter of Lord Lytton to Mr. Asquith, sent on behalf of the Conciliation Committee, November 15.)

### **Refusal of Facilities**

On the day of the Hyde Park demonstration, Mr. Asquith had written in reply to an earlier letter of Lord Lytton that no more time could be allowed for the Bill that Session, but as we have seen, friends and supporters were loath to take this as the last word on the subject, and to revert to a state of war.

Again, on October 27, in a private interview with a deputation of ladies from his constituency of East Fife, Mr. Asquith gave no hope of facilities that Session, and would say nothing as to future possibilities. It was, however, Sir Edward Grey's statement to a deputation of ladies representing various societies in his constituency, on November 12, that finally convinced women that a renewal of hostilities was inevitable. While assuring his hearers of the progress the movement was



naking, he told them that not only were facilities out of the question, but that the Reform Bill which had so long been spoken of as likely to offer the desired solution was not likely to be introduced for some time.

### **Parliament Reassembles**

When Parliament reassembled on November 18 the Premier announced that, the Conference between the two Houses having broken down, he had advised the Crown to dissolve Parliament, and that the dissolution would shortly take place. He proposed that Government business should have precedence at every sitting up to the end of the Session, and in stating what that business should be, and also what he proposed to do if his party should be returned to power, no reference was made to the question of Women's Suffrage.

### **Ninth Convention : Twelfth "Raid" : "Black Friday"**

Suffragists were by no means unprepared for this situation. Members of the W.S.P.U. were indeed assembled in conclave at the Caxton Hall when news was brought of Mr. Asquith's pronouncement. Without loss of time, a number of them, led by Mrs. Pankhurst and the venerable Mrs. Garrett Anderson, M.D., ex-Mayor of Aldeburgh, immediately sallied forth to make their protest in the now familiar way. That the Government, on its side, was prepared for the renewal of hostilities is clearly evidenced by two things, both emanating from the fertile brain of Mr. Churchill. As long previously as March 15 he had announced in the House certain ameliorations of prison discipline which he was prepared to allow in the case of persons whose offences, "however reprehensible," did not involve "moral turpitude." These ameliorations were allowed by a special rule, known as Rule 243 A, which, after lying on the Table of both Houses for a period of thirty days, thereafter became law.

Again, as he himself tacitly admitted in the House (Novem-

ber 24), he had issued certain instructions to the police as to the line they should take on the occasion which now arose, namely, to make as few arrests as possible. "My intention was that the arrests should be made as soon as there was a lawful reason," he said. It was never made public what means he had suggested should be adopted to deal with the situation.

In point of fact, when the women came into conflict with the police, they were treated with the utmost savagery and brutality. They were pummelled and pinched, and thrown about by policemen both in uniform and plain clothes (there being many of the latter in the crowd); blows were rained on them with clenched fists, sticks, and even helmets, and language of the vilest description was employed. Wanton acts of cruelty, such as twisting the arms, forcing back the thumbs, gripping the women by the breasts, were common, while acts of indecency which cannot be particularized were complained of in many cases. In fact, almost every instruction in the Police Manual was violated, these things being testified to by onlookers as well as by members of the deputation (see below, p. 166).

Some 300 deputationists left the hall, but only 115 of their number and 4 men had been arrested after six hours of indescribable scenes, a fact which in itself testifies to the probability that there was some understanding that arrests were to be as few as possible.

### Protests within the House

While these scenes were being enacted in Parliament Square, certain Members were doing their best to force a decision on the question in the House. Mr. Keir Hardie, that ever stalwart champion of the cause, asked for two hours in which to discuss his motion that the Conciliation Bill should be excepted from the rule of Government business having the precedence at every sitting. Mr. Asquith, promising to give an answer presently, nevertheless left the Chamber without

doing so. Lord Castlereagh then moved an Amendment to the Premier's proposals, embodying Mr. Keir Hardie's suggestion. A debate took place at this point, in spite of the entreaties of the Premier, who had by then returned, that the Amendment should not be pressed. Several Members insistently urged him at least to receive the deputation. He replied that his private secretary had done so, and promised to make a further pronouncement the following week.

The Amendment was lost, though fifty-two Members voted for what was practically a vote of censure on the Government. (Official Reports, Col. 135, Vol. 20.)

### **Charges against the Prisoners Dismissed**

To crown this series of events, when the prisoners came up the following day at Bow Street, the charges were all withdrawn by the express instructions of the Home Secretary, as announced by Mr. Muskett, who appeared to prosecute on behalf of the Chief Commissioner of Police. This course of action was in sharp contrast to that of Mr. Churchill's predecessor at the Home Office, for it will be remembered that Mr. Gladstone had repeatedly disclaimed all responsibility as to the actions either of the police or of the magistrates. Mr. Churchill's action was openly described in the Press as an electioneering dodge.

### **Mr. Asquith's Announcement**

The promised announcement, made the following Tuesday, was as follows: "The Government will, if they are still in power, give facilities in the next Parliament for effectively proceeding with a Bill, if so framed as to permit of free Amendment" (cheers). Asked if the Government was prepared to make it a Government measure, if it passed the Second Reading and Committee stage, so as to improve its chances in another place, Mr. Asquith evaded the question by the remark that he very much doubted if that would improve it. (Official Reports, Col. 273, Vol. 20.)

The House adjourned a few days later, November 28.

The comment of *The Times* (November 24) on this announcement was as follows: "Women's Suffrage on a democratic basis is an issue of this election, and if the electors confirm the Government in power, the new Parliament will be considered to have received a mandate on the subject."

### Thirteenth "Raid"

This pledge was, however, repudiated by the W.S.P.U. as worthless, both because the promise to deal with the question in the next Parliament, instead of the next Session, was too vague, and because the promise of facilities for a Bill framed on a "democratic" basis was regarded as illusory, as such a Bill would stand a very slender chance of passing through either House. So there and then another "raid" took place, this time on Downing Street, where Mr. Asquith and Mr. Birrell were ignominiously hustled by the irate demonstrators. Over 160 arrests were made on this occasion, many of those arrested being some who had been so unexpectedly released on the previous Friday. Mr. Muskett, who was again in charge of the prosecutions, ruefully remarked that the extreme leniency shown on that occasion had apparently had the effect of provoking scenes of greater disorder than before. There were indeed many cases of broken windows at the private residences of Cabinet Ministers, including that of the Prime Minister. By the instructions of the Home Secretary, charges were only preferred against persons guilty of this offence or of assault, with the result that 75 persons were convicted, out of the 180 arrested on the 22nd and 23rd. The magistrate, Sir Albert de Rutzen, stated that in the whole of his thirty years' experience, he had never heard of such a course being taken. The sentences imposed varied from fourteen days' imprisonment or a fine of 40s. to two months' imprisonment without the option of a fine, the latter sentence being given in sixteen cases. In accordance with the usual procedure,



the list of previous convictions was read out, and this time Mr. Muskett also mentioned in several cases that the defendants had been charged on the previous Friday, evidence which was clearly inadmissible, for, as we have seen, the charges brought on that day were one and all dismissed. Another violation this of British ideas of justice, which holds a prisoner innocent until his guilt has been established. On the other hand, if Friday's offences were punishable, the charges ought not to have been withdrawn.

Mr. Churchill's new rule regarding prison treatment was not at once resisted by the Suffragettes, who decided to test it first. Its provisions are quoted at the end of Part IV., and to those provisions widely differing interpretations were given from time to time. At first they meant that in practice the Suffragettes were allowed to wear their own clothes, to be supplied with food from outside, and to speak to one another at exercise. Among the first batch of prisoners to come under these provisions, the hunger strike was indeed adopted in two cases as a protest against the treatment experienced in prison in spite of these ameliorations, and forcible feeding was adopted; but as soon as this became known, the fines were paid by friends outside, in order that the prisoners might make their story known during the progress of the General Election which was then taking place.

### **Inquiry as to the Events of "Black Friday" Refused**

We must now return to the conduct of the police on what was afterwards always known as "Black Friday." An inquiry was made by Dr. Jessie Murray and Mr. Brailsford, and the evidence of 135 persons who were present on that day was carefully sifted. It was abundantly clear that, whether acting on their own initiative or on instructions issued to them, the police endeavoured by every possible means, including torture and acts of indecency, to terrorize their victims, not even ceasing from so doing when they had them

under arrest. The facts were laid before the Conciliation Committee, who drew up a memorandum (entitled "Treatment of the Women's Deputation by the Police," published by the Woman's Press), calling upon Mr. Churchill to hold an official inquiry into the circumstances. This he declined to do, contenting himself with an official denial. The matter did not rest there, however. In March of the following year, he was closely questioned in the House as to the exact wording of the instructions issued to the police, whether they were in writing, and so on. Mr. Churchill made a series of evasive replies, saying that the instructions he had given had not been fully understood or carried out, and that the police had continued acting on the instructions given in the days of Mr. Gladstone, namely, to avoid arresting as far as possible for technical obstruction. "No orders, verbal or written, emanating directly or indirectly from me, were given to the police," he stated categorically on March 13, but this statement may be compared with that quoted on p. 162 above.

A few days after "Black Friday," Mr. Churchill was assaulted on his return journey from Bradford (where a man interrupter had been ejected from his meeting with such violence that his leg had been broken) by Mr. Hugh Franklin, nephew of Mr. Herbert Samuel. Mr. Franklin was promptly taken into custody by the detectives by whom the Minister was surrounded; and on making his appearance in the police court to give evidence against his assailant, Mr. Churchill was again closely guarded.

### **The General Election of December**

In the General Election which took place in December, the truce being definitely at an end, the W.S.P.U. offered the Government uncompromising hostility wherever it was possible to do so. An active anti-Government campaign was carried on in fifty constituencies, in ten of which the Liberal Candidate failed to secure re-election. As was expected, the

Liberals were again returned to power, the majority of the combined Liberal, Labour and Irish forces over the Unionists being practically the same as in January, with, however, a larger number of Members than before pledged to the principle of Women's Suffrage.

### **Attitude of the Freedom League and National Union**

It should be mentioned that the Freedom League, which in common with all other Suffrage Societies, had thrown itself whole-heartedly into propaganda work on behalf of the Conciliation Bill, had, on its rejection, decided to refrain from militant action, in view of the unexpected circumstances which necessitated the dissolution of Parliament before it could again consider the question. This Society therefore expended all its energies upon influencing the electors and candidates at the General Election.

The National Union made a great effort to secure the return of friends of the cause, and in two constituencies, East St. Pancras and Camlachie, Candidates offered themselves on the Woman Suffrage question solely; but they were both returned at the bottom of the poll.

The activities of these societies in other directions, such as caravan tours, fêtes, and demonstrations in London and the provinces, are too numerous to record.

### **Debate in the Australian Senate**

We must not omit to mention an important occurrence which took place towards the end of the year whose events have just been reviewed. On November 17 the Australian Senate unanimously passed a strong resolution affirming the beneficial results which had followed on the admission of women to the franchise in that country, and urging all nations enjoying representative government to follow its example (see p. 231). A second resolution to the effect that a copy of the resolution should be cabled to Mr. Asquith met with

some opposition, on the ground that it was not becoming for a young country to advise the Mother Country. It was, however, argued that in this matter Australia was politically older than Great Britain, and moreover that she had given advice concerning Chinese labour on the Rand, which had been accepted, and that she had set the pace in the matter of the Deceased Wife's Sister Bill, and that in a matter such as this, which affected the happiness and welfare of the human family, it would be wrong not to tender the advice in question. The second resolution was carried by a majority of eleven to four, and the cable was accordingly dispatched.

On May 4 of the following year, Mr. Asquith stated in the House, in reply to a question, that the resolution had been received, and in reply to a further question as to whether he had also received one from the House of Representatives, and whether it could be circulated among Members of Parliament, he said he must have notice of the question. Nothing further was heard of the matter.

When the Premier of Australia, the Hon. Andrew Fisher, visited the Mother Country in the summer of 1911, he openly and repeatedly advocated the cause of Women's Emancipation.

## 1911

### Christmas in Prison

The sixteen prisoners who had been sentenced to two months' imprisonment were in Holloway over Christmas and the beginning of the New Year. It transpired that one of the effects of Mr. Churchill's new rule was that the usual remission of sentence was not allowed, for the reason that advantage had been taken of exemption from prison tasks which that rule afforded.

Two others who took part in the Black Friday deputation succumbed to the injuries they sustained on that occasion—



Mrs. Clarke, Mrs. Pankhurst's sister, on Christmas Day, the day after her release, and Miss Henrietta Williams on January 2.

### **Meeting of Parliament : Fortunes of the Ballot**

On January 31 the new Parliament met, and the first week of the Session was devoted to the swearing in of Members, and other routine business. On February 6, the King's Speech, the chief items in which had reference to the Peers' Veto and the Insurance Bill, was read. There was no reference to Women's Suffrage, but shortly afterwards two friends of the movement, Sir George Kemp and Mr. Goulding, secured the second and third places in the ballot respectively, and the first place being ceded to Sir George Kemp, he announced his intention of introducing a new Conciliation Bill at an early date. All private Members' time up to Easter being, however, promptly appropriated by the Government, the earliest date that could be secured for the Second Reading was May 5.

### **Another Albert Hall Meeting**

On March 23 the W.S.P.U. called another meeting at the Albert Hall, when a welcome was given to Miss Vida Goldstein, President of the Women's Political Association of Victoria, who was able to speak from personal experience, and from the woman's point of view, of the effect of the emancipation of the women of Australia. Among other things she spoke of the feeling of humiliation with which she had beheld the grille of the Ladies' Gallery of the House of Commons, and declared that it typified the harem idea of women, on which legislation-affecting women was based, and in her opinion its existence alone justified the militant movement.

### Census Resistance

On April 2, census night, another demonstration was given of the growing spirit of rebellion among women. The idea originating with the Freedom League that as women were not regarded as persons, they should not submit to be enumerated as such, was eagerly taken up by thousands. Many women householders, who in that capacity were of course responsible for the correct return of the census papers, either tore them up or returned them blank, or with some message of defiance written thereon. As the penalty for such a refusal of information was a fine of £5 or one month's imprisonment, some courage was required for this course of action. In a considerably larger number of cases various means were adopted to frustrate the authorities, and to evade the census, while evading at the same time the possibility of prosecution. Some householders, men as well as women, threw open their houses to rebels for the night, and the number of refugees thus sheltered was never revealed. Some women spent the night *al fresco*, or attended the many all-night entertainments which were specially organised by Suffrage Societies in London and elsewhere. A book could indeed be written concerning the occurrences of that eventful night, which moreover would assuredly not prove dull reading.

The action which the authorities would take was eagerly awaited. Nothing happened. Two or three days went by, but no writs or summonses were issued, and nobody was arrested. On April 5, in answer to a question in the House, Mr. John Burns, President of the Local Government Board (which department was responsible for the Census), said that he did not anticipate there would be any appreciable effect upon the accuracy of the statistics, and that the number of individuals who had evaded being enumerated was altogether negligible. In answer to a further question as to whether proceedings would be taken against those who had been

known to have done so deliberately, he said: "In the hour of success, mercy and magnanimity must be shown." It was estimated by those conversant with the extent of the movement that the number of evaders ran into six figures, but this sin against science went absolutely unrebuked and unpunished, and those who had been guilty of it had some justification for contending that Government must be by consent.

### **Bills before Parliament: Support from Town and City Councils**

On February 9, the First Reading of Sir George Kemp's Bill took place, and an Adult Suffrage Bill was also introduced by Sir William Byles the same day. On April 5 Mr. Dickinson introduced yet another Bill, but no further progress was made with regard to either of the last two.

Before the Conciliation Bill came on for its Second Reading, resolutions were passed in its favour by eighty-six City and Town Councils and Urban District Councils. It may be mentioned here that by October of the same year the number had increased to 143, and, according to a statement made by Mr. Dickinson in the House on May 5, 1913, it had still further increased by that date to 182. The list of October, 1911, included the five largest provincial cities in England, the three largest in Scotland, the capital of Ireland, and the most important city in Wales. The list of these ten representative cities is as follows, with the majority by which the Resolution was carried:

Birmingham: 31 to 15  
 Liverpool: 44 to 19  
 Manchester: 43 to 10  
 Sheffield: 38 to 6 (1 neutral)  
 Leeds: Passed without a division

Glasgow: Passed unanimously  
 Edinburgh: 24 to 2  
 Dundee: Passed unanimously  
 Dublin: Passed unanimously  
 Cardiff: 24 to 4

This list might be greatly enlarged, and many further details given, but it sufficiently indicates the degree of support

which the measure had in the country generally. It should be borne in mind that Municipal Councils are as a rule reluctant to take up political questions, also that they are elected by both men and women, the latter being precisely those whom it was proposed to enfranchise under the Bill.

It is significant that no resolution of a contrary nature was passed by these bodies, either as regards this or any other Bill, or the question generally.

### Second Reading of the Second Conciliation Bill

The Second Reading of the Bill took place on the appointed date (May 5). In introducing it, Sir George Kemp pointed out that it differed from its predecessor both as to title, which permitted of free amendment, and in the omission of the £10 qualification, which met the difficulty about faggot voting. The clear principle was to give the vote to women householders, all classes of whom would be fairly represented, as proved by statistics which had been collected under the supervision of Mayors and other responsible persons. The number of women whom it was proposed to enfranchise under the Bill was about a million.

Compared with the debate of the previous year, this one was somewhat flat. In all, thirteen speeches were delivered, which followed very much the same lines on both sides as in the debate of 1910. Mr. Lansbury, who in the recent election had been returned as the Socialist Member for Bow and Bromley, made his first speech in favour of the principle, stating that he "gloried in the women's fight."

The front benches were noticeably empty, but Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Runciman, as also Mr. Henderson and Mr. W. Redmond, voted for the Bill, and when the result of the division was announced, it was found that the increased majority of 167 had been recorded (Ayes, 255; Noes, 88). (Official Reports, Col. 738 *et seq.*, Vol. 25.)



An analysis of the polling shows the following distribution of parties:

	<i>Liberal.</i>	<i>Unionist.</i>	<i>Labour.</i>	<i>Nationalist.</i>
For ..	145	53	26	31
Against ..	36	43	0	9

There were also 55 pairs, one of which consisted of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Balfour.

(*Votes for Women*, Vol. V., p. 431.)

Like its predecessor, this Bill was referred to a Committee of the whole House.

### **The Lord Mayor of Dublin at the Bar of the House**

The next event of interest was the visit of the Lord Mayor of Dublin to London, to present a petition in favour of Women's Suffrage in person at the Bar of the House. This event was the result of many years' effort on the part of Irish Suffragists, more especially in recent years of members of the Irish Women's Franchise League, who in the face of many obstacles had succeeded in bringing the matter before the Dublin Corporation, by whom it was considered on April 3. A resolution was then passed by a majority of twenty-two to nine to the effect that a petition in favour of the Bill should forthwith be prepared, and after being sealed with the City Seal, should be presented at the Bar of the House by the Lord Mayor, accompanied by Members of the Council and the Civic Officers, reasonable expenses being defrayed out of the Borough Fund. It is worthy of note that the ancient privilege of presenting a petition at the Bar of the House is exclusively confined to the Lord Mayors of London and Dublin, but at this time had not been exercised for twenty-three years.

Accordingly, the Lord Mayor (Mr. Alderman Farrell), accompanied by Mr. Alderman McWalter and the Town Clerk (Mr. H. Campbell), started off early in May to accomplish

this mission. The party met with a rousing reception on its arrival at Euston on May 11, at midnight. The following day, when the Lord Mayor and his suite arrived at the House, he was arrayed in his official robes, and, preceded by the Irish Mace and the two-handed sword, said to have done duty at the Battle of the Boyne, he proceeded to the door of the Chamber. The Sergeant-at-arms, having then informed the Speaker of his presence, and been told to admit him, thereupon seized his mace, and, advancing to the door, admitted the three gentlemen, and stood by them, with his mace shouldered and ready for all emergencies, while two watchful attendants took the further precaution of drawing out two brass rods from their hiding places until they met in the centre of the chamber and barred further progress. Then the following colloquy took place:

THE SPEAKER (*with well simulated curiosity*): "What have you there, my Lord Mayor?"

THE LORD MAYOR: "A petition from the Right Honourable the Lord Mayor, the Aldermen, and burgesses of Dublin."

THE SPEAKER (*graciously, yet authoritatively*): "Let it be read."

The petition was accordingly read by the Town Clerk, who, having been a Member of Parliament himself, was presumably not unduly overawed by so much ceremony. It expressed the earnest hope that Parliament would see fit to remove, by the Bill then before it, the disabilities under which women lay. It touched on the injustice of withholding the franchise from women taxpayers in particular, on the changed conditions of modern life, which forced many women into competitive employment, on the success which had attended the granting of the Municipal franchise to women, and on the fact that legislation had only partially met their growing social and economic needs, and concluded with a renewed prayer that the Bill then before Parliament might be passed that Session.

On the conclusion of the reading, it devolved upon the Clerk Assistant to receive the petition and hand it to the

Speaker, while the Lord Mayor's party bowed themselves out amid the applause of the members, who thereupon addressed themselves to the business of the day, which business, as it happened, was specially concerned with matters affecting women (Official Reports, Col. 1529, Vol. 25).

That night the Mayor and Mayoress were entertained at a dinner in the Connaught Rooms, at which leading members of all the chief Suffrage Societies and many other distinguished men and women were present. In replying to the toast of his health, Mr. Alderman Farrell said that he "appealed to the men in Parliament not to reduce the Mother of Parliaments to the position of a serio-comic assembly, existing only for the purpose of deceiving those who elected it."

### **Negotiations with the Government as to Facilities**

At this period protracted negotiations took place between the friends and leaders of the movement on the one hand, and the Government on the other, with regard to the vexed question of facilities. It is necessary to summarize these somewhat minutely, for even at the time they were in progress they were not very clearly understood, even by those who were following events closely, still less by the public generally.

(1) In reply to a question in the House on May 29, Mr. Lloyd George, answering on behalf of the Prime Minister, said that the Government was prepared to allot a week for the consideration of the Bill when it should again have passed its Second Reading—not indeed that Session, for time did not permit, but in 1912. Pressed for further particulars, Mr. Lloyd George made more than one ambiguous statement, which did not satisfy the Conciliation Committee.

(2) Speaking at a dinner at the National Liberal Club three days later, Sir Edward Grey made a statement which was considered somewhat more satisfactory. He said that the opportunity had now arrived for the House of Commons to get out of an "invidious and discreditable position," and

undertook that the promised week would be an "elastic" one, and that full opportunity would be accorded to the promoters and supporters of the Bill to defend themselves against obstruction. He also urged all friends of the measure to take full advantage of the opportunity, which, he assured them, was a real one.

The Conciliation Committee, however, through its Chairman, Lord Lytton, pressed Mr. Asquith for the answer to certain specific questions.

(3) The answer to these questions was written on June 16. Mr. Asquith referred Lord Lytton to Sir Edward Grey's utterances, which he said accurately expressed the intentions of the Government, and in reply to the special points raised said that the Government would be generous in the interpretation of "the week" offered, as they were "unanimous in their determination to give effect, not only in the letter but in the spirit, to the promise in regard to facilities" which he had made in November last.

Commenting on this, the *Nation* observed in its leading article of June 24: "From the moment the Prime Minister signed (this) frank and ungrudging letter, women became in all but the legal formality voters and citizens."

Even the sceptical leaders of the W.S.P.U. were reassured this time, and a truce was announced which was welcomed on all sides, for the Coronation festivities were then in full swing, and anything which might have marred the rejoicings would have been greatly to be deplored.

(4) However, when these celebrations were safely over, Mr. Lloyd George made more than one vague allusion to the possibility of substituting another Bill for that with regard to which all this discussion had taken place, and in reply to a question addressed to him in the House on August 16, he stated that the Government could not give facilities for more than one Bill dealing with the same subject, but that any Bill capable of free discussion and amendment, which secured a



Second Reading, would be treated by them as falling within their agreement. Astounded at this, Lord Lytton wrote the next day to the Prime Minister, reviewing the situation, and again asking for a plain statement of the Government's intentions.

(5) In reply, Mr. Asquith wrote on August 23 as follows: "I have no hesitation in saying that the promises made by and on behalf of the Government, in regard to giving facilities for the Conciliation Bill, will be strictly adhered to, both in the letter and in spirit."

### **Second Truce Declared : New By-Election Policy of the W.S.P.U.**

Completely reassured this time, the W.S.P.U. strictly adhered to the truce which had already been proclaimed, and devoted all its energies to constitutional work. At by-elections it threw its influence on the side of those candidates who gave the most satisfactory pledges with regard to the Conciliation Bill. Each case was decided on its own merits, as explained elsewhere, though in two cases, as it happened, work was actively undertaken against the Liberal candidate.

### **The Women's Coronation Procession : Another Albert Hall Meeting**

We must now retrace our steps somewhat in order to give an account of the great demonstration which took place in London on the Saturday preceding the Coronation (June 17), when London was crowded with visitors. As already stated, Suffragists accepted Mr. Asquith's promise of full facilities for the Conciliation Bill in the following Session, and the demonstration, which had been planned for weeks beforehand, and which was the first in which all Suffrage Societies united, was the occasion of great rejoicings.

It was calculated that between 40,000 and 50,000 women marched in the procession which formed up on the Embank-

ment and made its way to the vicinity of the Albert Hall, and that it took about three hours to pass a given point.

At the head walked 700 women robed in white, each representing an imprisonment endured for the sake of the cause. There followed a historical pageant, a pageant of Empire, contingents from various Colonies, from Scotland, Ireland and Wales, International and Imperial contingents, while women of every grade of society had gathered together from all parts of the country to demonstrate the solidarity of womanhood. Musicians, actresses, writers, graduates in academic dress, gymnasts, nurses, and women representing various other professions and occupations too numerous to mention, were all to be seen. The Societies represented included various men's societies, one section being occupied by men graduates and undergraduates. At the head of the W.S.P.U. section walked the well-known leaders, Mrs. Pankhurst, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Christabel Pankhurst, while Mrs. Despard led the Freedom League contingent, and Mrs. Fawcett the vast number of processionists contributed by the National Union.

The route of the procession was lined by an incalculable number of spectators, and the evidence it afforded of unanimity among Suffragists of all shades of opinion, no less than its extreme artistic beauty, which recalled the pageantry of the Middle Ages, were freely admitted.

An interesting feature in the proceedings was provided by the presence in a window on the route of the venerable figure of Mrs. Wolstenholme Elmy, who for forty-six years had been a worker in the movement. As the procession swept round the corner of St. James's Street, where this veteran leader was seated, each member raised the right hand or waved a pennon, in token of respect, and she was accorded an ovation on taking her place on the platform of the Albert Hall later in the day. This building which had been secured by the W.S.P.U., as on previous occasions, proved incapable of

holding all who sought admission, and an overflow meeting was held in the Empress Rooms, while other societies betook themselves to other halls in Kensington and elsewhere; but many thousands of women were unable to gain admittance anywhere.

Among the distinguished men and women assembled at the Albert Hall may be mentioned the Lord Mayor of London, Mr. and Mrs. Israel Zangwill, Mrs. Hertha Ayrton, Lady Stout, Mrs. Saul Solomon, their Highnesses the Maharajah Gaekwar and Maharani of Baroda, Miss Elisabeth Robins, to take a few names more or less at random. There were also present several Members of Parliament and their wives, and many titled personages. Messages were read from the International Suffrage Alliance, then assembled in convention at Stockholm, and from the newly formed Men's International Alliance for Woman Suffrage.

The keynote of the meeting was the expectation of victory, though the necessity for unabated watchfulness, and the possibility of the need for further sacrifices, were not forgotten. A Resolution expressing satisfaction at the impending triumph of the cause, and pledging those present to use any and every means to turn to account the Premier's pledge, was carried unaniomusly. Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, as Honorary Treasurer, made an appeal for funds, announcing that the £100,000 limit had been passed, and that now efforts would be made to reach a quarter of a million. The meeting concluded with a fine speech from Mrs. Besant, who spoke on the wide human plane, and urged women to make a wise use, for the uplifting of humanity, of the privilege which she saw so nearly within their grasp.

In the Press, considerable prominence was given to the demonstration in leading articles and special accounts, unstinted praise being accorded to those responsible for the organization. It was the *Manchester Guardian* which observed that the most remarkable thing about it was that it should be a necessity at that stage of the world's history.

### Peaceful Propaganda

So promising was the situation that early in October Mrs. Pankhurst left for a tour in America, and a vigorous campaign was carried on throughout the country by all societies during the autumn. The boycott of the Press, which had so severely handicapped the movement, was at this period temporarily broken down by the inauguration of the "Women's Platform" in the *Standard*. As explained in an editorial note of October 3, publicity and the free ventilation of opinions upon all sides was essential, and this the woman's movement had never had in the daily newspaper Press of the country. It was therefore proposed to throw open this page impartially to all parties, sects and theories.

### The Manhood Suffrage Bill

In November, however, a bomb-shell exploded. On the 7th of that month Mr. Asquith received a deputation of the People's Suffrage Federation, which was introduced by Mr. Henderson, who pointed out that of a population of forty-five millions, only about seven and a half million were voters, and who, after referring to the many anomalies of the existing electoral system, asked for a simple Adult Suffrage Measure, including women as well as men.

In his reply, Mr. Asquith referred to his own unaltered hostility to Women's Suffrage, but said that the Government would abide by its promises with regard to the Conciliation Bill. He then dwelt at some length on a man's right to vote, and agreed that the technical distinctions existing between property owners, occupiers, householders, lodgers, and so on, must be swept away. He did not himself agree that the term "man" must include "woman," but said it would be open to the House of Commons to accept an Amendment including them. He concluded by stating that it was the intention of the Government to introduce a Bill in the next



Session, whose object would be to give effect to the principle that the franchise must be put on a simple and rational foundation.

Thus in response to an agitation, extending over a period of well-nigh half a century, for the extension of the franchise to women, the reply of the Government was to announce the further extension of the franchise to men (for the simple residential qualification proposed would have had that effect), a reform for which there was absolutely no demand at the time, though it was undeniable that the anomalies of the electoral system needed sweeping away.

### **Another Albert Hall Meeting**

This announcement caused widespread consternation and indignation in the ranks of Suffragists of all shades of thought. The W.S.P.U. had already prepared for another meeting at the Albert Hall on the 16th, and this was made the occasion for a declaration of renewed war on the Government, unless it was prepared to withdraw the Manhood Suffrage Bill, and to substitute for it a measure giving precisely equal franchise rights to men and women, and to carry such a measure through in the following Session, and to stake its existence on so doing. Miss Christabel Pankhurst, in reviewing the situation, pointed out that it was the Government that had made a settlement of the question on non-party lines impossible, and that if the Cabinet was divided on the subject, it should not fight about the question in public, but come to some decision at Cabinet meetings. She showed how easy and how dishonest it would be for Suffragettes to accept the offer then made, for in spite of all appearances, the leaders of the movement knew it to be worthless; and she spoke of the inevitable blame and execration which members of the Union would incur in renewing hostilities, which they would feel bound to do if Mr. Asquith's answer to the deputation the following day were not satisfactory. Whether she was

right or wrong in her estimate of the situation, subsequent events, more especially Mr. Lloyd George's utterances, will show.

### **Mr. Asquith Receives Another Deputation**

Efforts had been made by various societies to secure an interview with Mr. Asquith, immediately after his announcement on the 7th, with the result that on the 17th of the same month a deputation consisting of representatives of nine Suffrage Societies, including for the first time representatives of the W.S.P.U., and of the Freedom League, presented itself at 10, Downing Street, where it was received by Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George. Mrs. Fawcett briefly introduced the deputation.

Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Christabel Pankhurst spoke on behalf of the former society, and pointed out that as the Government had made the question a party one, it was obviously impossible to expect a settlement on non-party lines. They openly accused the two Ministers of having tricked and misled Suffragists, and said that they regarded the introduction of the Manhood Suffrage Bill as a contravention of the Prime Minister's pledge. The demand contained in the Resolution passed at the Albert Hall meeting was repeated.

Lady Selborne and Lady Betty Balfour, on the other hand, speaking on behalf of the Conservative and Unionist Franchise Association, pleaded for the Conciliation Bill, which in their opinion was the only one which it was possible to pass into law.

Mrs. Despard and Mrs. How Martyn, on behalf of the Freedom League, asked for the franchise for women on precisely the same terms as for men. They said they were representatives of a militant society which was prepared to offer "uncompromising hostility" to any other solution of the question.

Mrs. Fawcett, speaking on behalf of the National Union,

referred to the forty-four years' constitutional work done by that society, and of the support which successive Suffrage Bills had received in the House. She pointed out that the Premier must not be surprised at the "immense amount of exasperation" which his proposal, in the face of all this, to give more voting power to men, had occasioned. With regard to possible amendments to the proposed Reform Bill, she specifically asked:

(1) Whether it was proposed that it should go through all its stages in 1912?

(2) Whether it would be drafted so as to admit of amendments introducing women on other terms than men?

(3) Whether the Government would undertake not to oppose such amendments?

(4) Whether such amendments, if passed, would become an integral part of the Bill?

To all these questions, Mr. Asquith, in his reply, answered in the affirmative.

Miss Eva Gore Booth voiced the views of working women, more especially in the North of England, Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett those of actresses in their dual capacity of wage-earners and human beings, Mrs. Alison Garland those of women Liberals, while Miss Hoey and Miss Falconer pressed the claims of Irish and Scotch Suffragists respectively.

In his reply, Mr. Asquith complimented the speakers, more especially Mrs. Despard, on the way in which they had presented their views, and assured his hearers that everybody realized the strength and intensity of the feeling which prevailed on the subject, and that those who were opposed to the principle of women's enfranchisement were not actuated by any disparagement of the dignity or functions of their sex. He assured the speakers that there had been no change of policy on the part of the Government, and that a great majority of his colleagues, and a majority of all parties in the House, were of a different opinion from himself. Neither

party, he said, could take the matter up officially, which he admitted was a hardship. He would abide by the pledge he had given with regard to the Conciliation Bill, but reminded his hearers that there was nothing to prevent them from moulding it on the lines of the Dickinson Bill, or of an Adult Suffrage Bill. It was impossible to concede to the demands of the W.S.P.U., the reason being that he was the head of the Government, and could not make himself responsible for the introduction of a measure which he did not conscientiously believe was in the interests of the country. He could not say which of the two Bills—the Manhood Suffrage Bill or the Conciliation Bill—would be introduced first, but assured the deputation that it would make no difference.

Mr. Lloyd George also spoke, and said he would take the first opportunity of setting forth his private views, the Prime Minister having reiterated his statement that the question was an open one. He added these significant words: "Don't commit yourselves too readily to the statement that this is a trick upon Woman Suffrage. If you find next year that as a result of this 'trick' several millions of women have been added in the Bill . . . and that the Government stand by that Bill . . . then those who have committed themselves to that ill-conditioned suggestion will look very foolish."

### Mr. Lloyd George's Offer

The following day, "P. W. W." announced in the columns of the *Daily News* that he was authorized by Mr. Lloyd George to say that he placed his services at the disposal of the great and growing suffrage party, that he was prepared to move a Woman's Suffrage amendment to the Reform Bill, and "to advocate it inside the House and outside the House by speech and influence." "What more can be asked of Mr. Lloyd George," said the same paper in its leading article, "is not obvious." That which Suffragists demanded was the fulfilment of this pledge.



### Fourteenth "Raid"

The leaders of the W.S.P.U. were by no means-reassured by these statements, and on the following Tuesday, November 21, another meeting was held at the Caxton Hall, when Miss Pankhurst, who presided, described the Government's pronouncement as a trap which Suffragettes declined to enter. Only a political infant, she asserted on another occasion, could fail to see the vital necessity of a measure for which the Government would make itself responsible, and the hollowness of Mr. Lloyd George's offer of campaigning in favour of an Amendment to the Reform Bill, which could and would be neutralized by the opposition of other Ministers. The only course consistent with honour and the traditions of British statesmanship, she declared, was for Mr. Lloyd George, and those who agreed with him, to assert themselves in the Cabinet, and to insist that the will of the majority, in this, as in other matters, should prevail. Mr. Asquith's assurance that it mattered not which came on first for discussion, the Conciliation Bill or the Amendments to the Reform Bill, the one advocating a definite and limited franchise and the other introducing all manner of alternatives and complications, was regarded as additional evidence of the disingenuousness with which the matter was being treated.

The immediate result was that, there and then, another "raid," led by Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, took place, which resulted in the arrest of 223 persons, including several men, some 150 of whom were sentenced the following day to the intimate disgusts of prison life, for periods varying between five days and one month, and, in one case, two months. A feature of the raid was the smashing of a number of windows of Government offices and other buildings, the damage being estimated by the Treasurer of the Household at £90. The damage done by twenty-one of the offenders being over £5, they were committed for trial at the Newington Sessions

and thus were tried before a Judge and jury. Those present at these trials testified to the contrast they presented to Police Court procedure, for the defendants were accorded a fair hearing, and Mr. Wallace, who presided, showed that he appreciated the motives underlying the deeds which had been done, while administering justice impartially. Two of the defendants were discharged, and the others were sentenced to two months' imprisonment.

### **Mrs. Pethick Lawrence's Irregular Trial**

An incident showing the haste and confusion which prevailed at Bow Street, where the trials lasted the best part of a fortnight, occurred in connection with Mrs. Pethick Lawrence's case, on November 23. She had been sentenced to a month's imprisonment, when the magistrate's attention was drawn to the fact that the constable who had given evidence against her had not been sworn. So this omission was repaired, the evidence taken a second time, and the sentence pronounced once more. Application was made for a rule *nisi* for a *certiorari* to quash the conviction, since Mrs. Lawrence had been twice tried for the same offence. The force of this was recognized, and, the request being granted, she was released on bail.

To avoid recurring to the subject, it may here be stated that the case came before the Lord Chief Justice, Mr. Justice Pickford, and Mr. Justice Avory, in the Divisional Court on April 23, 1912. In the course of the hearing it transpired that no entry had been recorded in the Police Court annals of the sentence pronounced in the first trial, another piece of evidence of the irregularities which prevailed on that occasion. The case was decided against Mrs. Lawrence, but the fact that that very day, the charge of "conspiracy" against her and others was, as we shall presently see, preferred in the Central Criminal Court, presumably accounts for the fact that nothing more was heard of the matter (see p. 202).

### Mr. Lloyd George's Speech at Bath

Considerable light was thrown on the political situation by Mr. Lloyd George, who, a week after he and the Premier had received the deputation of Suffragists, gave expression to his personal views at a meeting of the National Liberal Federation at Bath. He refused to receive a joint deputation of members of the National Union and of the W.S.P.U. in that city, and many Suffragettes were violently ejected from the meeting. In the course of his speech, Mr. George declared that the Conciliation Bill had now been "torpedoed," and that the way was therefore clear for a "broad and democratic" amendment to the Reform Bill. He did not give any indication how this result was to be brought about, but devoted the rest of his speech to enlarging upon the fitness of women to exercise the franchise, and the injustice of excluding them from it any longer.

Even after this, Mr. Asquith stated in the House (November 27) that *all pledges with regard to the Conciliation Bill remained in full force.*

### Mr. Asquith Receives Another Deputation of Anti-Suffragists

On December 14 Mr. Asquith once more received a deputation, led this time by Lord Curzon, from the National League for opposing Women's Suffrage. For some time past this society had been deliberating how an appeal to the nation could be achieved, and now, with many circumlocutions, and much avoidance of the word itself, its representatives pressed for a Referendum. Mr. Asquith, in his reply, twitted the members of the deputation on their reluctance to use the word, and pointed out that the chief objection to its use would be the fact that those advocating the change in question would regard the verdict of the men electors as in the highest degree misleading and unsatisfactory. He admitted

once more that a considerable majority of his colleagues in the Cabinet differed from himself, for he was still of opinion that to grant the franchise to women would be "a political mistake of a very disastrous kind." To prevent this disaster he urged that "effective militant operations of a constitutional kind" should be adopted both by men and women who saw the matter from the same point of view as himself.

On the other hand, at a meeting convened by the Women's Liberal Federation in support of Women's Suffrage, two days later, at the Horticultural Hall, Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George professed themselves emphatically in favour of the principle, and also asserted amid great applause their unswerving loyalty to the Prime Minister. Members of the W.S.P.U. were successfully excluded from the hall, the windows of which were boarded up, while constables were stationed on the glass roof.

Statements made about the same time by Mr. Birrell, Lord Haldane, and Mr. Hobhouse (the last named of whom alone expressed hostility to the principle) showed further how hopelessly involved the situation was.

Interruptions of Ministers' meetings again occurred whenever it was possible for Suffragettes to secure admission, and scenes of disorder and of brutality on the part of stewards and others were once more frequent. On November 29 Mr. Asquith had been unable to obtain a hearing at the City Temple, where he had consented to speak about a University settlement, and had been obliged to leave at the end of ten minutes, without having completed a single sentence.

### **Firing of a Pillar-Box**

An indication of the far more serious nature of the offences which might be expected in the future was afforded by the firing of a pillar-box on December 15. The perpetrator of this deed, Miss Emily Davison, who had deliberately informed the authorities of her intention, and had been arrested in the



act, stated that she did it entirely on her own responsibility. She was sentenced at the Old Bailey to six months' imprisonment.

### **The Women's Tax Resistance League**

Special mention must be made of one of the many Suffrage Societies which sprang into existence during the decade before the outbreak of war. With the Freedom League originated the idea that in view of the dictum that taxation and representation must go together, a logical protest on the part of voteless women would be to decline to pay Imperial taxes until they should have a share in electing Members of the Imperial Parliament. From the year 1908 onwards, Mrs. Despard had adopted this form of protest, with notable results. In the following year, some of her goods were seized, but difficulties occurred, as one auctioneer after another refused to have anything to do with selling them. When one was finally found, the sale was attended by a large number of Mrs. Despard's followers, who succeeded in holding up the proceedings until requested by her to desist. When her piece of plate was at last put up for sale, the bidding was very brisk, and the article was eventually knocked down to a certain Mr. Luxembourg for double its estimated value. This gentleman insisted on returning it to Mrs. Despard, who accepted it on behalf of the Women's Freedom League, among whose archives, suitably inscribed in memory of the occasion, it holds an honoured place.

In subsequent years, various devices were adopted with the object of compelling Mrs. Despard's submission. Thus she, for whom prison had no terrors, was threatened with imprisonment in default of payment; she was summoned before the High Court, when, in her absence, judgment was pronounced against her. On only two other occasions, however, was distraint levied.

Towards the end of 1909, a separate society, with the above

title, was formed, with Mrs. Kineton Parkes as secretary, for experience showed that a special knowledge of the technicalities of the law was necessary, and special machinery had to be set up. Those who addressed themselves to this business were rewarded by the discovery of curious anomalies and irregularities of the law where women were concerned. Thus, for instance, it was revealed that whereas married women are not personally liable to taxation (the Income Tax Act of 1842 never having been brought into line with the Married Women's Property Acts), nevertheless payment of taxes was illegally exacted of them whenever possible. With the assistance of the expert advice of Mrs. Ayres Purdie and others, many cases of injustice and overcharges were exposed and circumvented, Somerset House officials being mercilessly worried.

### **Imprisonments for Non-Payment of Taxes**

It was in May, 1911, that the first imprisonments in connection with this particular form of protest took place. Miss Andrews of Ipswich was sent to prison for a week for refusing to pay her dog's tax, and about the same time, Mrs. Sproson of Wolverhampton served a similar sentence for the same offence. The latter was, however, rearrested, and sentenced this time to five weeks' imprisonment, being placed in the Third Division in Stafford Gaol. She thereupon entered on the hunger strike, and on the personal responsibility of the Governor, without instructions from the Home Office, she was transferred to the First Division, where she completed her sentence.

Imprisonments in various parts of the country thereafter took place with some frequency, but whenever possible this extreme course appears to have been avoided, and resisters' goods were seized and sold by public auction, the officials reserving the right of adopting whichever course they deemed most suitable. By this means, auctioneers' sale rooms,

country market-places, corners of busy thoroughfares, and all manner of unlikely spots, became the scene of protests and demonstrations.

### **Miss Housman's Imprisonment**

The case which excited the most interest was that of Miss Clemence Housman, sister of the well-known author, who, having stoutly declined to pay the trifling sum of 4s. 6d. (which by dint of writs, High Court Procedure, etc., in due course mounted up to over £6), and not having goods which could be seized, was arrested by the Sheriff's Officer, and conveyed to Holloway, there to be detained until she paid. A storm of protest arose, meetings being held at Mr. Housman's residence in Kensington, outside Holloway Gaol, and in Hyde Park on the Sunday following the arrest. After a week's incarceration, Miss Housman, who had been singularly well treated in the First Division, was unconditionally released, and on inquiring of the Solicitor of Inland Revenue how she stood in the matter, she was informed that it was closed by her arrest and subsequent release.

By way of celebrating victories such as these, the League held a John Hampden dinner at the Hotel Cecil in December of the same year, when some 250 guests assembled and listened to speeches from prominent Suffragists of both sexes, when we may be sure that the moral of the story of John Hampden was duly pointed, and many a modern parallel was quoted. A novel feature of the evening's proceedings was the appearance of a toast mistress, in the person of Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett.

## **1912**

### **Case of William Ball**

The dawn of the year 1912, like its predecessor, saw several persons expiating their offences in prison. The treatment of one of these, a working man, by name William Ball, occasioned

widespread consternation, and the history of the case must be briefly recorded. On December 21 he was arrested for breaking windows at the Home Office, and sentenced to two months' hard labour. On reaching Pentonville Prison, and finding that he was not to be accorded the ameliorations of Rule 243 A, he adopted the hunger strike. He was thereupon fed by force, and the practice was continued for more than five weeks. A letter dated January 22 was received by his wife which stated that he was in his usual health, but a second one, dated February 10, laconically informed her that he was to be certified as a lunatic, and to be removed to a pauper lunatic asylum. This letter did not, however, reach Mrs. Ball until the 12th, and on hurrying to the prison, she found that her husband had already been removed to Colney Hatch. With the assistance of friends she succeeded in securing his discharge the following day, and on being removed to a nursing home, the unfortunate man slowly recovered his health.

As may be supposed, the matter was not allowed to rest there. Mr. McKenna, who had succeeded Mr. Churchill at the Home Office the previous October, was called upon to answer many questions on the subject in Parliament, and on February 26 Mr. Lansbury moved an adjournment of the House, and set forth the facts of the case. A debate took place, which was continued the next day, in the course of which Mr. McKenna defended the action of the authorities, but agreed to grant an inquiry. A few days later, a protest meeting, inaugurated by the Men's Political Union, was held at the Queen's Hall, when vigorous speeches were made by Mr. Nevinson, Mr. Lansbury, and others.

On March 4 Mr. McKenna announced in the House that he had asked the President of the Royal College of Physicians to nominate a medical man to hold the promised inquiry, and in May, Sir George Savage having been duly appointed, the inquiry took place. It was of a private character, and there was no cross questioning of the prison officials concerned.



A White Paper was duly published on May 8, in which Sir George Savage stated that he considered that Ball had been treated with the utmost consideration, and that his insanity could not in his opinion be attributed to the treatment in prison. Many points in the case were, however, never cleared up, as pointed out by Mr. Nevinson in the *Daily News* of May 10. The most important of these was: How came it that a sane and healthy man, who had not had a day's illness for twenty years, and whose family history was free from any taint of insanity, was in a few weeks reduced to such a condition?

### **The New Session : Mr. Agg Gardner and the Ballot**

Parliament reassembled on February 14, and on the 16th, Mr. Agg Gardner, who had been returned the previous April as the Member for Cheltenham, having been greatly assisted in his campaign by Suffragists, secured the third place in the Ballot, and announced his intention of reintroducing the Conciliation Bill. (The first place was won by Mr. Harold Baker, who subsequently introduced a Plural Voting Bill.) Mr. Agg Gardner's Bill was read for the first time on February 19, but there was no discussion. The W.S.P.U. intimated that it had ceased to be interested in any scheme short of a Government measure, in view of the failure which had attended the unofficial Bills brought forward during the past forty years or more (notably in the years 1910 and 1911), and of the inadequacy of a proposal to enfranchise some million women, if the number of male electors were to be increased to some twelve million.

### **Welcome to Released Prisoners : Mrs. Pankhurst's Speech**

On February 16, a dinner of welcome was given to the prisoners who had just been released, after serving sentences connected with the disturbances of the previous November. Mrs. Pankhurst presided, and called upon those present to take part in the next demonstration, which was planned to

take place early in the following month. In the course of her speech she said: "We don't want to use any weapons that are unnecessarily strong. If the argument of the stone, that time-honoured official political argument, is sufficient, then we shall never use any stronger argument. . . . I am taking charge of the deputation, and that is the argument I am going to use."

### **Mr. Hobhouse at Bristol**

At that very hour, Mr. Hobhouse, speaking at Bristol, at an Anti-Suffrage meeting, was apparently looking further ahead. He said that in the case of the suffrage demand, there had not been the kind of popular sentimental uprising which accounted for the burning of Nottingham Castle in 1832, or the destruction of the Hyde Park railings in 1867. There had in short been no ebullition of popular feeling.

Mrs. Pankhurst's speech was the subject of more than one anxious inquiry in the House, and Mr. Hobhouse's has since been quoted to an extent which must have caused him no little surprise, for it is hardly credible that he uttered the remarks reported above as a deliberate incitement to violence. As such they were, however, accepted.

### **Two More Meetings at the Albert Hall**

On February 23 the National Union held a great meeting at the Albert Hall, when Mr. Lloyd George spoke in favour of Women's Enfranchisement, this being the third occasion on which he had done so since his famous pledge in the preceding November (see p. 184). In his speech Mr. Lloyd George reiterated the Premier's statement of the previous November, but gave no indication as to when the Reform Bill would be introduced, nor how the proposed amendments could be carried. He made vague references to the Referendum.

Within a week—*i.e.*, on February 28—the Anti-Suffragists held a meeting in the same hall, which was attended by a



### UNITED WE DIFFER.

MR. LLOYD GEORGE. "VOTES FOR WOMEN! DON'T YOU LISTEN TO MY ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE!"

MR. HARCOURT "NO VOTES FOR WOMEN! MY ESTEEMED COLLEAGUE IS TALKING NONSENSE!"

*[Reproduced by special permission of the proprietors of "Punch."]*





number of prominent persons. Lord Cromer presided, and the other speakers were: Lord Loreburn, Lord Curzon, Mr. Lewis Harcourt, Mr. F. E. Smith, and Miss Markham, the last named, according to *The Times*, making the speech of the evening. She urged women to make the most of their opportunities in municipal work, and her assertion that the absence of the vote was the "symbol of disinterested service" was greeted with much enthusiasm.<sup>1</sup> A Resolution declaring that the enfranchisement of women was hostile to their welfare, and to that of the State, and that such a far-reaching change should only take place upon a clear demand by the electorate, was carried, although there were some cries of "No."

### **Militancy and No Mistake !**

The stone-throwing raid foreshadowed in Mrs. Pankhurst's speech on February 16 had been announced for March 4, but this time the police and the public generally were taken unawares, for precisely at 5.45 p.m. on March 1 a surprise attack was made, this time on the windows of shops in the West End of London, and before the police could marshall their forces some thousands of pounds' worth of damage had been committed. There was, however, no attempt on the part of the perpetrators of the outrages to make good their escape, and the result was that on this and subsequent days 219 arrests were made, and sentences ranging from seven days to two months were imposed in the police courts. Those who did damage to the extent of £5 or more were committed for trial at the Newington Sessions, and in their cases the sentences ranged from four to six months, with one sentence of eight months. A few gave "undertakings," and a few were discharged.

There were some notable personalities among the prisoners, who were drawn from every section of the community. To mention but a few names, there was Dr. Frances Ede, M.D.,

<sup>1</sup> These views have since been modified (see *Times*, March 30, 1917).

Miss Janie Allan (to whom Mr. McKenna was evidently referring when, on June 20, he mentioned that one member of the rank and file was rich enough to buy up all the rest), Dr. Ethel Smyth, the musician and composer, and Dr. Lousia Garrett Anderson, M.D., B.S., who has since become famous as Chief Surgeon of the Endell Street Military Hospital.

### **Raid on Clement's Inn : Arrest of the Leaders**

On March 5 the police descended upon the offices at Clement's Inn with warrants for the arrest of Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Pankhurst. The charge also included Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Tuke, who in point of fact were already under lock and key, their share in the recent raid having been to throw stones through the windows of 10, Downing Street. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence were duly arrested, but Miss Pankhurst evaded capture, and her whereabouts were for many months a source of bewilderment to the police and a subject of speculation among the public generally. On April 25 a question was asked in the House as to what action the Government proposed taking, seeing that Miss Pankhurst had been seen and recognized in the United States, and the reply was that it was not in the public interest that its intentions should be disclosed.

### **Difficulties in Holloway and Elsewhere**

The difficulties experienced with regard to the behaviour and treatment of prisoners on previous occasions were as nothing compared with those which now confronted the authorities. The "riotous misconduct," as Mr. McKenna described it, of the "wretched individuals" concerned, as Mr. Asquith described the prisoners, was frequently referred to in the House, where the Home Secretary was called upon to answer questions regarding what was taking place in the various prisons where they were incarcerated. To begin with, some prisoners were sent to the Second, and some to the

Third Division, with or without hard labour. Again, Rule 243A was allowed in some cases and arbitrarily disallowed in others, various reasons being assigned for this differential treatment. At first those under the rule were allowed food from outside every day, and afterwards only once a week. On April 22 Mr. McKenna, however, announced that all prisoners were allowed the ameliorations of the rule. Again, in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, bail was at first refused, but it was granted on March 28. On the same date it was stated to be impossible to grant the same privilege to Mrs. Pankhurst, and a few days later this was also allowed. Many were the questions asked in the House about the treatment of individual prisoners, one case being cited of a sentence of two months' hard labour being imposed for three shillings' worth of damage.

### **Various Public Meetings**

About this time, three large meetings were held in London. One was an indignation meeting convened by outraged tradesmen at the Queen's Hall on March 11, with Mr. W. Boosey in the chair, a deputation from which was appointed to wait upon the Home Secretary to urge him to restore law and order. Another was held on March 7 at the London Opera House under the auspices of the W.S.P.U., when a Resolution was moved by Mr. Lansbury, M.P., deploring the reactionary conduct of the Government, which was driving women to adopt militant methods in place of reasonable arguments, and calling upon it to remove the cause of discontent. He spoke with authority of the wire-pulling which had been going on in Parliament with the object of preventing the question from being effectively dealt with. The third meeting was convened by a number of non-militant Suffrage Societies, and it took place on March 15, also at the Opera House. Speeches were made by various prominent men and women, Sir Alfred Mond, M.P., and Mr. C. A. McCurdy, M.P.,

among the number. A Resolution was unanimously passed, expressing the opinion that coercion was no remedy for injustice, and calling upon the Government to pass a measure giving women their just rights as citizens.

### **Preliminary Hearing of the Conspiracy Charge at Bow Street**

We must now return to events connected with the trial of the leaders. On March 6 Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence having spent the night in the police cells at Bow Street, and Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Tuke being brought from Holloway, the four were charged, under the Malicious Injury to Property Act, with having conspired with one another and with Miss Pankhurst to incite certain persons to commit damage. They appeared on four subsequent occasions at Bow Street, bail being refused in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, while Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Tuke were on each occasion conveyed back to Holloway, where the circumstances of their imprisonment were particularly harsh. These proceedings thus extended over the month of March, the evidence having reference chiefly to the events connected with the window-smashing raid, and to the defendants' complicity in the matter. At the last hearing at Bow Street, on March 28, Mrs. Tuke was acquitted, and the others were committed for trial, bail being allowed this time for Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence. All three reserved their defence, and when on April 4 they made one more formal appearance at the police court, it was announced that the remainder of Mrs. Pankhurst's sentence would be remitted, and that she too would be admitted to bail.

### **Second Reading of the Third Conciliation Bill**

Just at this time, when public feeling ran high, the Third Conciliation Bill reached its Second Reading. It was introduced by Mr. Agg Gardner on March 28, and the debate, which lasted about six and a half hours, was characterized by considerable seriousness of tone, though nothing very



striking was said on either side, either regarding the general principle involved or the merits of the particular measure under consideration. There were many references to militancy, which all necessarily deplored, though Sir Alfred Mond, who seconded, drew attention to the fact that no great movement had ever succeeded without disorder, and quoted these words, à propos of disorders in Ireland, from Mr. Morley's "Life of Gladstone": "No reformer is fit for his task who suffers himself to be frightened off by the excesses of an extreme wing." While disorder might be no argument, he remarked, coercion was certainly no remedy. Again, Mr. McCurdy pointed out that in the King's Speech of 1832<sup>1</sup> were two paragraphs, one deploring the Bristol riots, and another announcing a measure for the immediate redress of the grievances responsible for those same disorders. Mr. Lane Fox probably had some good reason for his assertion that the window-smashers had provided Members with an opportunity to be rid of pledges which in their hearts they disliked. Mr. Charles Roberts slyly inquired whether Lord Hugh Cecil's recent act of hooliganism and disorder inside the House was an argument for doing away with University representation. The reference is presumably to the prominent part taken by the noble Lord, the previous July, in shouting down the Premier, when the latter rose to make a statement concerning the Parliament Bill. On this occasion, the Speaker was compelled to adopt the unusual course of adjourning the House (*Times*, July 25, 1911).

Lord Robert Cecil and Sir Edward Grey pointed out that in any case the militants were against the Bill, the former urging that to pass it would not be giving in to threats, and the latter that the authors of the outrages would be disappointed if the vote on the Bill were the same as before.

Other points cited by the supporters of the Bill

<sup>1</sup> This speech was as a matter of fact delivered on December 6, 1831. See Hansard, 3, Col. 1-4. Vol. 9.

were the Resolutions passed by City and Town Councils (see p. 171), the Resolution passed by the Australian Senate in November, 1910, and the good results which had followed in those countries where the experiment had been tried.

The chief points on the opposition side were the undeniable fact that women were women, the possibility of the way being opened for them to become Members of Parliament, and the physical force argument.

A subject to which several references were made was the letter which had appeared in that day's *Times*, from the pen of the eminent bacteriologist, Sir Almroth Wright, in which the unfitness of women to participate in public affairs was discussed very frankly from the physiological point of view. After declaring that no man could close his eyes to these things, but that he did not feel at liberty to speak of them, he proceeded in a letter which occupied nearly three columns to do so, asserting that it was the abnormal, incomplete or sexually embittered women alone from among whom the ranks of the militant movement were recruited. "In reality, the very kernel of the militant suffrage movement," he asserted, "is the element of immorality." "Women as a class," he asserted further on, "are quite incompetent to adjudicate upon political issues"; and in anticipation of the contention that where women exercised the vote, the experiment was an admitted success, he declared that in those countries, women voted according to the behests of their men-folk. But the letter should be read in its entirety. It is interesting to record that two years later, the National Union received a legacy of £500 from Sir Almroth Wright's eldest son (*Times*, March 13, 1914).

Some of the speakers in the debate, like Viscount Helmsley, referred to this letter with approval, while others including Mr. McCurdy and Lord Robert Cecil, emphatically repudiated the views it advocated.

Of course the chief interest in the day's proceedings centred

round the result of the division, which was as follows: Ayes, 208; Noes, 222. Motion lost by 14 votes (Official Reports, Col. 615 *et seq.*, Vol. 36).

The distribution of parties is shown by the following table:

	<i>Liberal.</i>	<i>Unionist.</i>	<i>Labour.</i>	<i>Nationalist.</i>
For ..	117	63	25	3
Against ..	71	116	0	35

There were also 33 pairs.

(*Votes for Women*, Vol. V., p. 431.)

The most noticeable thing about these figures is the hostility shown by the Nationalist party, thirty-one members of which had voted for, and nine against, the Bill of the previous year. Even members of the Conciliation Committee (Sir T. G. Esmonde, Mr. Lardner, and Mr. Hugh Law) were absent unpaired. There were many references to this defection in the debate on Mr. Snowden's amendment to the Home Rule Bill later in the year. It came as no surprise to Suffragists who had been following events closely, for they had seen in the absence of any mention of Women's Suffrage in the Home Rule Bill an indication of the true attitude both of the Government and of the Nationalist Party. They saw in the result of the voting confirmation of the opinion already expressed that dependence on an unofficial measure was futile, argued that amendments to the Reform Bill would be equally so, and reiterated the demand for a Government measure. Anti-Suffragists claimed that their meeting of February was responsible for the result.

### Nineteenth Albert Hall Meeting

The very same evening that the leaders of the W.S.P.U. had been committed for trial, and that the Conciliation Bill was defeated, another gigantic demonstration took place at

the Albert Hall, when the scenes of enthusiasm customary on these occasions were once more witnessed. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence received a great ovation, but were of course debarred from speaking. Speeches full of fire and eloquence were delivered by Miss Annie Kenney, Miss Elisabeth Robins, Mr. Zangwill, and others, and a sum of £10,000 was put together in the course of a few minutes.

### First Conspiracy Trial at the Old Bailey

After Mrs. Pankhurst's release on bail, repeated applications were made for the postponement of the Conspiracy Trial, in order that she might sufficiently recover her health to be able to conduct her own defence. The application was twice refused, but finally granted, and eventually May 15 was fixed for the hearing of the case. Mr. Justice Coleridge presided, and there was a formidable array of legal luminaries, the case for the prosecution being conducted by the Attorney-General, Sir Rufus Isaacs. Mr. Tim Healy defended Mrs. Lawrence, while her husband and Mrs. Pankhurst conducted their own defence.

In his preliminary address to the jury, Sir Rufus Isaacs assured them that *no political issue whatever was in the slightest degree involved*. There were fifty-four counts to the indictment, and the case for the prosecution was based on the speeches and written articles of the defendants and of Miss Pankhurst, long extracts from these being read in Court. A large number of police officers, shopkeepers, and others were called as witnesses, whose evidence confirmed the connection between these speeches and the events of the previous November and March. All this was not disputed by the defendants, who by their cross examination of the witnesses sought to establish the fact that they were leading a popular and growing movement, and that it was the Government, which by its callous disregard of pledges, was responsible for the situation which had arisen. Mr. Hobhouse's incitement to violence



was quoted until the Judge declared that the jury knew it by heart, and quotations from the speeches of those who had advocated armed resistance in Ulster were introduced in a disconcerting manner, for the names of the authors of these incitements were not divulged until the passages had been quoted in full. Incidentally it came out in the course of the evidence that a special department at Scotland Yard had the movements of Suffragettes under particular observation, and that reports of speeches officially made by members of this department were sometimes based entirely on memory, sometimes partly on memory and partly on notes, which latter were in many cases then destroyed. The Judge disallowed some of this evidence.

Very few witnesses were called for the defence, which necessarily took another line from that laid down by the prosecution. It is impossible to give more than the merest summary of the speeches for the defence which are given, *in extenso* in *Votes for Women*, Vol. V., and which were reprinted in pamphlet form under the title "Speeches from the Dock" by the Woman's Press.

Mrs. Pankhurst, in her address to the jury on May 21, which lasted for one hour and three-quarters, began by emphasizing the fact that though she and her co-defendants (to whom she paid a warm and generous tribute for their services to the cause) stood there accused of "conspiracy," there was nothing they had done of which they had any need to be ashamed—on the contrary, they welcomed the opportunity their position afforded of setting forth their view of the situation. She then reviewed the history of women's struggle for emancipation, much as it is given in Part I. of this history, and showed how in her own case her public work as a Poor Law Guardian, and in other capacities, had brought her face to face with the impossibility of securing ameliorations of the law where women were concerned, and had convinced her of the necessity of devising some new

means of agitating for that passport to liberty, the vote. She recapitulated the manner in which constitutional means, including the undoubted right of petition, had been invariably thwarted, and how step by step the members of the W.S.P.U. had been driven to more and more unconstitutional courses. She concluded with a plea for recognition of the political character of the agitation.

Mr. Pethick Lawrence, speaking as a member of the legal profession, and as one therefore who was deeply sensible of the necessity for preserving law and order, and as one whose personal views of the responsibilities of citizenship went far beyond what the law enforced, pointed out how in ordinary circumstances the methods which had been employed, for which he felt the greatest repugnance, would have been absolutely unjustifiable. He reviewed the history of the last two years or so of the agitation in particular, and told how he and his wife had calmly and deliberately come to the conclusion that the course of action adopted by the militants was the right one, in view of the deception and trickery that had been practised by politicians. He pointed out that women could never have acted in a manner so contrary to their natural instincts unless urged by some very strong motive indeed, and instanced infant mortality as a matter which more especially cried out for their intervention. He put it to the jury that the speeches of his co-defendants, and of other women who had been tried at the Newington Sessions, were not the utterances of hysterical and excited persons, but of persons who had deliberately embarked upon a certain course of action. While disputing that he himself had incited to violence, differing as he did in this respect from certain highly placed personages from whose speeches he quoted (Sir Edward Carson, Mr. F. E. Smith, Lord Selborne, and others), he staunchly upheld all that had been done, deeming it to have been morally justified.

Mr. Healy, in his speech on behalf of Mrs. Lawrence, also

reviewed the political events of the last few years, which he characterized as a history of deception on the part of responsible Ministers; and he spoke with withering scorn of the vindictiveness of the Government in thus persecuting their political opponents for actions which in every case had already been expiated by long terms of imprisonment. He asserted that a conviction, far from stopping the movement, would but add fuel to the flame.

Mrs. Lawrence added a few words herself, later on, after the jury had returned their verdict, and before sentence had been passed. She pointed out that both she and Mrs. Pankhurst had already suffered imprisonment in connection with these very events of November and March, averred that they did not shrink from punishment, recognizing it as they did as part of the price which had to be paid for freedom. On the other hand, they did feel that the question of division was one affecting their honour. She gave two instances of men, recently sentenced for criminally assaulting women, having been placed in the First Division, and appealed to the Judge to restore to women something of their old faith in the justice and impartiality of the Courts of Law.

On the last day of the trial (May 22) the Attorney-General addressed the jury on behalf of the Crown, and, brushing aside all such matters as purely irrelevant, confined himself to recapitulating the evidence concerning the window-breaking "raids" of November and March, and to proving the responsibility of the defendants for those occurrences. He insisted once more that whatever motives there may have been was an immaterial matter, and one unnecessary for the jury to consider.

The Judge then proceeded to his summing up, and once more the leading points in the case were cited. He insisted that the action of the Government had no bearing whatever upon the issue, and made sarcastic comments upon the policy of attacking "the person most ardently in favour of the

cause"—to wit, Mr. Lloyd George—and upon the impossibility of the Prime Minister being "at the beck and call of any woman who chooses to force herself on him." He reminded the jury that their supreme duty was to administer the law, and that the question of motive lay outside their province.

The jury brought in a verdict of "guilty," but unanimously expressed the hope that in view of the undoubtedly pure motives which underlay the agitation, the utmost leniency and clemency would be exercised. The Judge thereupon pronounced sentence on all three defendants of nine months' imprisonment in the Second Division, and further ordered Mr. Lawrence and Mrs. Pankhurst to pay the costs of the prosecution.

The sentences given in the case of the leaders, and even of the rank and file, may be compared with that of six months' imprisonment pronounced on Tom Mann, for the famous "Don't Shoot" pamphlets. This sentence was afterwards reduced to one of two months, and in point of fact, Mr. Mann was released after undergoing about six weeks' imprisonment (*Times*, June 24). The severity with which Suffragettes were treated may also be contrasted with the comparative leniency shown to rioters in connection with the coal strike which was in progress at this time. For instance, at Tabrax Colliery, bands of miners raided a mine where a few non-union men were working, and not only stopped them from doing so, but wrecked various buildings, and burnt the engine-house (*Daily Mail*, March 8). Again, on April 5, 1,000 windows were broken in connection with a riot in Fife (*Daily Telegraph*, April 6). No arrests are reported as having been made on either occasion. In its issue of March 20, *Truth* drew a sharp contrast between the treatment meted out to Syndicalists and Suffragists respectively, and expressed the opinion that it was "more than ever necessary" that women should obtain the protection of the vote.



### **Further Difficulties In Prisons : Foreible Feeding Again**

If there had been confusion in connection with the behaviour and treatment of Suffragettes in prison before, it now became worse confounded. Mr. Lawrence was conveyed to Wormwood Scrubs, the prison reserved for the lowest grade of prisoners, where, according to the Governor, treatment under Rule 243A was out of the question. He was, however, shortly transferred to Brixton.

In the case of Mrs. Pankhurst and Mrs. Lawrence, some doubt at first existed as to whether the rule would apply to them. As soon as this point was settled in their favour, a tremendous agitation arose, in which the foreman of the jury himself took part, that the recommendation of the jury should have effect, and that full First Division treatment should be accorded. Meetings were held all over the country, while from all parts of the world protests and memorials poured in, particularly influential ones being sent by the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge, and by leading men and women of France, while most significant of all was a memorial from men and women of international repute, whose names were received by cable, telegraph, and letter, and were forwarded by Mr. Frederic Whelen to the Prime Minister, the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, and the Home Secretary, with a strong protest against the non-recognition of the prisoners' offences as political in character.

On June 10 Mr. McKenna gave in and granted them full First Division treatment. The ostensible reason for this was that the Judge would himself have done so, had he only been assured at the time of the trial that the prisoners would in future abstain from any violation of the law, an assurance which was never given. The undertaking the prisoners actually gave, and which was accepted, was one to the effect that they would not in any way abuse the greater freedom they would enjoy in the First Division by controlling the

movement in any way while in prison, which was quite a different matter, and this undertaking could equally well have been given at the conclusion of the trial, had it been required. All this, however, did not transpire till some time after, when the matter had been repeatedly brought up in Parliament, and many a wrangle had taken place. On these occasions the Speaker did not at all adopt that impartial attitude which is commonly supposed to be indispensable in one occupying that responsible position; for instance, on one occasion (June 20) he expressed the opinion that the Suffragettes had themselves courted the treatment they were receiving.

No sooner had the leaders been transferred to the First Division than an agitation arose for similar treatment for the rank and file. During the time that had already elapsed since they had been committed to prison, the hunger strike had broken out sporadically, and forcible feeding had been resorted to, with the result that some prisoners had been released before the expiration of their sentences. By April 22, however, all prisoners had come under Rule 243A, and comparative peace prevailed.

When the leaders were transferred to the First Division, there were still eighty-one women in Holloway, Aylesbury, Birmingham, and Maidstone prisons, fifty-two of whom were serving a four months' sentence, and twenty-nine one of six months. Application was immediately made that these women should be accorded the same treatment in prison as the leaders. Among others, a memorial signed by 104 Members of Parliament (no Member of either Front Bench having been asked to sign) was presented to the Home Secretary by Mr. Atherley Jones. Mr. McKenna, however, remained obdurate, with the result that all the prisoners without exception entered on the hunger strike, and the leaders joined in. Forcible feeding was again resorted to, and was applied to Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, while Mrs. Pankhurst was

threatened with the "horrible and beastly outrage." Mrs. Lawrence and Mrs. Pankhurst were released on the 24th, and Mr. Lawrence on the 27th, the latter after five days of forcible feeding, while every day members of the rank and file were discharged. The accounts which released prisoners gave of the scenes which took place in prison are revolting in the extreme, and the condition in which many of them were released was sufficient evidence of the injurious effects of the "hospital treatment" to which they had been subjected. It is unnecessary here to enter into any details. Suffice it to say that in point of fact many of the prisoners did indeed terminate their sentences, for forty-four of the eighty-one referred to above were released before the expiration of their sentences, the last of them on July 6—*i.e.*, about two months before their sentences would have expired in the ordinary course.

### Scene in the House

While these events were taking place in prison, Mr. McKenna was day by day assailed by questions in the House, which he answered as best he could, saying in the early days of the hunger strike that he hoped "wiser counsels would prevail." On one occasion, one of his accusers rapped out the remark: "I am not concerned with what the Home Secretary denies, I am concerned with the facts of the case." On two occasions the adjournment of the House was moved to call attention to what was going on. On the first of these (June 20) the debate fizzled out, and on the second (June 24) a division was taken, but the motion was lost. The question, however, was revived the very next day, when a remarkable scene was witnessed. The Premier having intervened in the discussion with the remark that any of the women could walk out of prison on giving an undertaking, Mr. Lansbury exclaimed: "You know they cannot!" (Cries of "Order, order.") "It is perfectly disgraceful that the Prime Minister of England

should make such a statement." Then, marching to the end of the Ministerial Bench above the gangway, he continued to address the astonished Premier in impassioned language, concluding with these words: "You will go down to history as the man who tortured innocent women." Mr. Lansbury then returned to his seat with the remark: "I have said my say, Mr. Speaker," but continued his remarks nevertheless, telling his fellow Members that they ought all to be ashamed of themselves. He was of course called upon to withdraw, the Speaker remarking severely that if other Members behaved so, the House would lose all respect and authority. With the parting shot that it had already done so, Mr. Lansbury withdrew, and an incident unparalleled in Parliamentary history was concluded (Official Reports, Col. 217, Vol. 40).

### **Motion to Reduce the Home Secretary's Salary**

The last, however, had not been heard of the matter. Three days later, in the debate on the Civil Service Estimates, Lord Robert Cecil moved a reduction of £100 in the salary of the Home Secretary. A debate took place which lasted for about five hours, in which Mr. McKenna was attacked by members of all parties. Mr. Atherley Jones, speaking as a lawyer, made a specially weighty indictment of the methods which had been employed in dealing with the situation. Criticisms referred chiefly to: (1) Inequality of treatment of prisoners, (2) employment of forcible feeding. With regard to the former it was pointed out that not only had the leaders been given First Division treatment, but also eight Irish women, who had been arrested that month for breaking windows in Dublin, were enjoying that privilege.

With regard to forcible feeding, frequent references were made to the case of William Ball, and to that of Miss Davison, who had thrown herself down the staircase, because, as she told the doctor, she felt a tragedy was wanted; her fall was,



however, broken by a wire netting, and the tragedy was for a while delayed (see p. 290). "Government has a higher function, . . . than the maintenance of law and order, and that is to do justice," said Mr. Snowden, in the course of the debate, and Mr. Healy assured the House that a guarantee would never be obtained if the women were kept in prison for ever. Two Members supported the Home Secretary (Mr. Cathcart Wason and Mr. McCallum Scott).

In replying to his critics, Mr. McKenna "chopped logic as to rule this or that or the other," to quote a phrase of Mr. Healy's. He pointed out that he was in difficulties whatever he did, and called for the sympathy and support of the House under "circumstances of unparalleled difficulty." He said that the prisoners must not be allowed to determine their own sentences, put the responsibility for the Division in which they were placed on the Judge or Magistrate who tried the case, and the responsibility for seeing that they did not starve themselves on the Prison Commissioners, or, alternatively, on the prison doctors.

On a vote being taken, the motion was lost, the Ayes numbering 69 and the Noes 213 (Official Reports, Col. 642, Vol. 40).

Questions, however, continued to be asked right up to the end of the Session, even after the Home Secretary had announced the release of all the prisoners, special interest being shown in the case of one prisoner, as to whose release Mr. McKenna had been particularly mysterious. It transpired that a brother had said that he would use his influence to keep his sister out of further trouble, and that this "undertaking" had been accepted, and she had been released. Two sisters, whose aged mother was dangerously ill were released on giving an undertaking to abstain from militancy for life. The Home Secretary admitted that this promise had no legal force (Official Reports, July 30, Col. 1838, Vol. 41).

It must be borne in mind that, with one exception only, the

offences which resulted in the terrible scenes which took place in Holloway and other gaols during the summer of 1912 consisted in nothing more revolutionary than the use of the "argument of the stone."

Now, however, a more dangerous phase followed. Three cases of arson are to be recorded before the end of the year.

### First Cases of Arson

Early in March Nurse Pitfield was arrested for attempting to set fire to the General Post Office, an action which she stated she did without the knowledge of any other person. She was sentenced on March 19 at the Central Criminal Court to six months' imprisonment, hard labour not being imposed, as she was suffering from cancer, the result of a blow received on "Black Friday" (November, 1910). Nurse Pitfield steadily refused to give any undertaking herself, but she was released in April, in response to a vigorous agitation got up on her behalf, and died on August 6—*i.e.*, before her sentence would have expired.

On July 13 a Suffragette was arrested for attempting to fire Nuneham House, the residence of Mr. Lewis Harcourt, and later Dr. Ethel Smyth, the well-known musical composer, was arrested on the charge of being concerned in the same outrage. The latter was discharged after the preliminary hearing at the Oxford Sessions, and stood bail for her companion, who was committed to the October Assizes, when (October 19) she was duly sentenced by Mr. Justice Ridley to nine months' hard labour. On reaching Holloway, she petitioned for First Division treatment, and this being refused she entered on the hunger strike. Forcible feeding was tried for a couple of days, but, it being found impossible to continue it in this case, on October 30 the prisoner was unconditionally released, having thus served eleven days of her sentence.

By far the most serious case was that of Mrs. Leigh and Miss Gladys Evans, which, however, resulted, after a pro-

tracted fight, in the complete triumph of the rebels. (Mrs. Leigh had previously been arrested nine times, and had been sentenced on seven of these occasions to various terms of imprisonment, lasting over fifteen months in all.)

The history of the case is as follows: In July the Premier paid a visit to Dublin, and in spite of infinite precautions, and the adoption of all manner of expedients, Suffragettes beset him at every turn. He was to speak at the Theatre Royal on the 19th, and on the previous day an attempt was made, between two performances, to set fire to the building. Very little, if any, effort was made at concealment on the part of those responsible for the crime, and Mrs. Leigh, Miss Evans, Mrs. Baines, and one other were arrested. The trial took place on August 6 and 7, and in the case of Mrs. Leigh, who conducted her own defence, the jury were unable to agree, and a fresh one was sworn. Mr. Justice Madden, who tried the case, spoke of Mrs. Leigh as "a very remarkable lady, of very great ability, and of very strong character," and said that it was his painful duty to pronounce a sentence which would have a deterrent effect. Mrs. Leigh and Miss Evans were accordingly sentenced to five years' penal servitude, Mrs. Baines (on a minor charge) to seven months' hard labour, while the fourth was acquitted.

Mrs. Leigh having assured the Judge that the sentences would not have the effect he anticipated, she and her two companions were removed to Mountjoy Prison. Here the usual request was made for treatment as political prisoners similar to that being at the time accorded to the eight window-breakers referred to below. This request was refused, though some concessions were offered and rejected. So within the first week the hunger strike was adopted, the result being that Mrs. Baines was released in a few days, and conveyed to a nursing home in a prostrate condition. For the first time, forcible feeding was employed in an Irish prison against the other two prisoners. An agitation was carried on, both

in Dublin and London, to protest both against the severity of the sentences, and against the employment of this process, and numerous petitions were sent to the authorities. It was officially stated that not under any circumstances would the prisoners be released, and hints were dropped that Mrs. Leigh would be treated as a criminal lunatic. On September 21 she was, however, released, in such a condition that a doctor and two nurses were in constant attendance during the following night, and it was some time before she was pronounced to be out of danger. Miss Evans was retained somewhat longer—*i.e.*, until October 3, when she was released in a similar condition. Each prisoner on her departure was presented with a "licence," which permitted her to be at large during the remainder of her sentence, provided she abstained from any violation of the law. On October 23 Miss Evans was rearrested the first time she left the house to which she had been removed from prison, on the charge of not having reported herself to the police, who as a matter of fact had been watching the house the whole time. She was remanded for a week, and recommenced the hunger strike, and, being dangerously near the end of her strength before the week had expired, she was brought before Mr. MacInerney to be dealt with. This gentleman, remarking on the extreme difficulty of carrying out the law strictly in the case of people who were "absolutely reckless of the consequences, for whom punishment had no terror, penal servitude no shame, the law no effective sanction," discharged her with a caution.

Further details concerning this remarkable case may be briefly summarized as follows:

1912. November 5. Miss Evans is rearrested. Remanded in custody. Resumes hunger strike.

November 8. Case heard and dismissed, the prosecution failing to prove that a "condition" of the licence was that Miss Evans should report to police.

December 11. Mrs. Leigh is tried on the charge of



having thrown a hatchet at Mr. Redmond in July, "thereby occasioning him actual bodily harm," this charge having been deferred at previous trials. An "undertaking" is given by the prosecution that the police (of whom nine are at the time watching the house to which she had been removed in September) shall not molest her on her way to the Court! She conducts her own defence. Jury disagrees. She is discharged on being bound over in her own recognizances in £50 to come up if called upon.

December 19. Both are rearrested for not reporting themselves to the police.

December 20. The magistrate imposes a sentence of fourteen days' imprisonment, but agrees to state a case for the High Court. Defendants are released on bail, and go to England without molestation.

1913. February. The case comes before three Judges (Lord Chief Baron, Mr. Justice Gibson and Mr. Justice Madden) in the King's Bench, Dublin. Magistrate's decision upheld. No order as to costs.

*The case was then allowed to drop*, the two prisoners having between them served sixteen weeks of the ten years to which they had been sentenced.

The Judge who tried Mrs. Leigh and Miss Evans had before him on the same occasion a case which was not dissimilar. An attack had been made on the Peamount Sanatorium, the reason being that certain persons objected to the position it occupied. A pavilion was completely destroyed, and the total damage was estimated at £500. The ringleaders were arrested, and two of them were sentenced to six months' imprisonment (*Irish Times*, August 3). They were, however, released after they had served five weeks of the sentence, by order of the Viceroy, who had declined to intervene in the case of Mrs. Leigh and Miss Evans (*ibid.*, September 4, 7).

### **Irish Women and the Home Rule Bill**

Earlier in the year the first militant actions had taken place in Ireland. Exasperated by the exclusion of women from the Home Rule Bill in the first instance, by the refusal of the Irish Parliamentary Party to lay their claims before the Premier, by the refusal of the latter to receive a deputation of Irish women on the subject, and by the forcible exclusion of women from the "National" Convention in June, eight ladies, including Mrs. Sheehy Skeffington, the daughter of Mr. Sheehy, M.P., copied the example of their English sisters by smashing some fifty windows of Government buildings in Dublin in June 13. They were of course arrested, four of their number being sentenced to two months' imprisonment and the other four (who did damage to the value of £5 or more) were after a month's delay sentenced to six months' imprisonment, and ordered to pay fines. (The sentence was afterwards reduced to one of five months, and the fines were remitted.) All eight prisoners were accorded First Division treatment, in spite of which concession four of them entered upon a sympathetic hunger strike when Mrs. Leigh and Miss Evans adopted this protest on being refused similar privileges. Forcible feeding was not adopted in the case of these four, who were released shortly afterwards at the termination of their sentences.

### **Progress of the Franchise and Registration Bill (Manhood Suffrage Bill)**

During all this time the Manhood Suffrage Bill had been proceeding on its way. To make the situation clear we must retrace our steps somewhat, and return to the time when it was first adumbrated. It will be remembered that this occurred in November, 1911. The answer of the W.S.P.U. has already been recorded in some detail, but this society was by no means alone in its attitude of hostility to the

Government for its action. Protests and Resolutions poured in, particularly from the Labour Party, which announced emphatically that it would be opposed to any extension of the franchise which did not include women. It declared that it was perfectly willing to support a genuine Adult Suffrage Bill. Indeed, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, speaking at a great meeting at the Albert Hall on February 13, which was convened by the I.L.P. and other societies to demand Adult Suffrage, said in reply to a question, that his party was prepared to turn the Government out on the subject, a reply which was greeted with great enthusiasm.

In January there arose in the Press a rumour to the effect that the question would be dealt with by means of a Referendum, a proposal which was hotly rejected by those most concerned.

Speculation was rife as to how the Government would solve the complicated question, and a Cabinet crisis arising out of the situation was freely discussed, for the attitude of the various Ministers was notoriously conflicting. In March the Third Conciliation Bill had been rejected, and when on May 21 Mr. Lansbury asked leave to introduce a Bill, which was practically the same as Mr. Jacob Bright's Bill of 1870, it was ruled by the Speaker that it would be out of order, in view of the fact that a similar Bill had already been discussed and disposed of that year. Yet the chance of amendments to the Franchise Bill being passed into law was still cherished in some quarters.

Even the Women's Liberal Federation found its loyalty strained to the uttermost, and at a meeting held on June 4 it passed a Resolution giving voice (on behalf of its 130,000 members) to the opinion that if women did not become enfranchised under the Reform Bill, it would become "perhaps impossible" to sustain the amicable relations then existing between the W.F.L. and the Liberal Party. There was a hot discussion and but few dissentients.

On June 17 the Franchise Bill was at last introduced, Mr. J. A. Pease, a Member well known for his Anti-Suffrage views, being in charge of it. The Bill aimed at simplifying the registration machinery as far as the Parliamentary Franchise was concerned (it did not touch the equally complicated machinery for the Municipal Franchise); it proposed to abolish the property qualification, plural voting, and University representation, and, finally, to give the vote to every Male Person, on a simple residential qualification of six months. It was calculated that some two and a half million men would have been added to the electorate. Mr. Pease observed, in introducing the Bill, that if women were admitted to the franchise on the same terms as men, ten and a half million of them would have to be placed on the register (Official Reports, Col. 1326 *et seq.*, Vol. 39).

Three days in July were devoted to the Second Reading of the Bill, the motion being entrusted to Mr. Lewis Harcourt, another avowed opponent of Woman's Suffrage. It would be wearisome to give any details of the debate in a history of women's fight for the vote, for this Bill made no attempt to remedy their grievances, and was indeed as severe a setback to the movement as it could well have. Mr. Lloyd George, who had objected to the Conciliation Bill as being too restricted a measure, and who had uttered the warning referred to on p. 184, and that other "friend" of the movement, Sir Edward Grey, were conspicuously silent throughout the debate, but an amazing variety of views were expressed by other Members on the burning question, as it was admitted by many to be. Vigorous protests against the exclusion of women from the Bill itself were made by Lord Robert Cecil (Con.), Mr. Hogge (Lib.), Sir A. Markham (Lib.), and Mr. Balfour (Con.). There were those who expressed their avowed hostility to any and every form of Woman's Suffrage, such as Mr. Harcourt (Lib.), and Sir F. Banbury (Con.). Some Liberals, like Mr. Dickinson and Mr. C. Roberts, contented



themselves with thanking the Premier for the opportunity he had afforded friends of the cause for giving effect to their opinions. On the other hand, some, like Mr. Pretyman (Con.) and Sir Robert Finlay (Con.), complained of the absence of any "lead" on the part of the Government. Lastly, others reaffirmed their allegiance to a restricted or a comprehensive measure, as the case might be. It was indeed unnecessary for the Premier to point out that the question cut athwart all party lines. That had been amply demonstrated many times before. Mr. Asquith also stated that in his opinion the subject was not relevant to that stage of the Bill, and added that he thought it altogether improbable that the House would stultify itself by reversing in the same Session the considered judgment at which it had already arrived.

The Bill passed its Second Reading by a majority of seventy-two (Ayes, 290; Noes, 218). (Official Reports, Vol. 40.)

The final *dénouement* will be recorded in the next chapter.

### **Propaganda Work : Albert Hall and Hyde Park Demonstrations**

Meanwhile Suffragists had consistently pursued the constitutional side of their work. On June 15 another great demonstration was held, under the auspices of the W.S.P.U., at the Albert Hall, when the chief speech was made by Mr. Healy, who, it will be remembered, had recently defended Mrs. Lawrence in the Conspiracy Trial. Referring to the chances then held out regarding the Conciliation Bill and the amendments to the Reform Bill, he declared that the promises and performance of the Government were "of a specious and continuous hypocrisy," and urged his hearers not to be humbugged into believing that they would get any relief or consideration upon the Manhood Suffrage Bill, advice which it appeared they were very ready to take. Miss Elisabeth Robins and others also spoke, and the collection amounted to £6,000.

On Sunday, July 14, another great demonstration took place in Hyde Park. This time no processions were organized, but the various local London branches of the W.S.P.U., under the organization of Mrs. Drummond and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, planned, financed and carried out the arrangements, with the result that a vast multitude assembled to listen to the speeches of various well-known persons, who spoke from twenty platforms. A Resolution calling for political equality between men and women was passed with but few dissentients. The day being the anniversary of the fall of the Bastille, red caps of liberty were a prominent feature in the decorations.

### **Miss Pankhurst in Paris : Occupation of Lincoln's Inn House by the W.S.P.U.**

In September it was announced that Miss Christabel Pankhurst was in Paris, and that, according to international law, she was there safe from molestation, her offence being of a political character. From this point of vantage she continued to write leading articles and to direct the movement, as indeed it was claimed she had done ever since her disappearance in March. The following month the W.S.P.U. moved from Clement's Inn to Lincoln's Inn House, a large and commodious building situated in Kingsway.

### **Mr. Mark Wilks' Imprisonment**

In September an incident occurred which illustrated both the anomalous position which married women occupy under the law and also the impossibility of enforcing the law where consent is withheld. Dr. Elisabeth Wilks, being one of those who held with the Liberal dictum that taxation and representation should go together, had for some years past refused to pay her Imperial taxes, and on two occasions a distraint had been executed on her goods, and they had been sold by public auction. Then it struck her that her "privileged" position under the law would afford her protection from

further annoyance of this kind, and being a married woman, she referred the officials to her husband. When application was made to the latter for his wife's income tax return, he told the harassed officials that he did not possess the required information, nor did he know how to procure it. After some delays and negotiations, the Treasury kindly undertook to make the assessment itself, charging Mr. Wilks at the unearned rate, though Mrs. Wilks was well known to be a medical woman, whose income was derived from her practice. After over two years of correspondence and threats of imprisonment, since Mr. Wilks sturdily refused to produce the sum demanded, he was arrested on September 19 and conveyed to Brixton Gaol, there to be detained until he paid. Still he remained obdurate, while friends outside busied themselves on his behalf. Protests poured into the Treasury offices, Members of Parliament were inundated with the like, deputations waited on everybody concerned, and public meetings on the subject were held in great number. The result was that, at the end of a fortnight, Mr. Wilks was once more a free man.

On the reopening of Parliament, Earl Russell brought the case up in the Lords, pointing out how the very legality of the proceedings constituted their absurdity, and in the Commons Mr. Lloyd George promised to consider the question of amending the law, but said that meanwhile he could not instruct the Revenue authorities to refrain from administering the law as it then stood (Official Reports [Lords], Col. 823, Vol. 12 [Commons], Col. 341, Vol. 42).

On June 10 of the following year Mr. Lloyd George received a deputation at the Treasury, when Miss Lena Ashwell, among others, explained the whole situation as far as married women and taxation were concerned with a lucidity which called forth the commendation customary on these occasions. The Chancellor admitted that women were entitled to protest against the "legal humiliation" to which they were subject, but said that it would cost him one and a half millions a year

to make a wife a taxable unit, and where otherwise, he inquired naïvely, was he to get that amount? He subsequently stated in the House (July 13, 1914) that the sum was two millions at a moderate estimate, but admitted that no exact figures were available.

Later in the same month Mr. Felix Cassell moved certain amendments to the Finance Bill, which were intended to deal with the question, and these were incorporated in the Act. In the opinion of those qualified to judge, however, these amendments did not go to the root of the matter, and did not remedy the grievances complained of. The whole matter is very complicated and technical, and could only be dealt with at a length of which space does not now permit.

### Other Tax-Resisters

Legislators had recently provided women with additional reasons for refusing to pay taxes. In 1911 the National Insurance Act became the law of the land, and defects in that Act as far as it concerned women, which were pointed out at the time, have become more and more apparent every year that the Act has been in force. Some few modifications were made in their favour, but they had no effective means of expressing their views. Again, by means of a Resolution, which occupied a few hours of discussion on August 10, 1911, Members of Parliament voted themselves a salary of £400 a year, and only one member, Mr. Walter McLaren, raised his voice to protest against the fresh injustice which this proposal inflicted on women, who were not only subject to legislation in the framing of which they had no voice, but were further called upon to pay those who thus legislated for them (Official Reports, Col. 1365 *et seq.*, Vol. 29).

The Revenue authorities did not repeat the experiment of arresting any women resisters on whom it was not possible to levy distraint, with the result that the Women's Tax-Resistance League claimed to have a growing list of members



who paid no taxes, and who, in spite of repeated threats of imprisonment, were still at large.

Distrain for non-payment was, however, frequent, with the result that up and down the country, and as far north as Arbroath, the gospel of tax-resistance was carried, and secured many adherents, including members of the enfranchised portion of the community, some of whom, in their official capacities, gave public support to the rebels. Many auctioneers of the better class refused to sell the goods of tax-resisters, and it is on record that one who had done so sent his fee as a donation to the League.

Two members of the League, Mrs. Darent Harrison of St. Leonard's and Mrs. Harvey of Bromley, barricaded themselves in their houses, and succeeded in keeping the officials who came to make the distrain at bay, the former for a period of several weeks, and the latter for a period of no less than eight months. In both cases, an entry was eventually made by force, but much public sympathy was evinced in both cases, and crowded meetings of protest were held in the largest local halls available.

It is interesting to record that on June 27 of this year, a statue was unveiled in the market-place of Aylesbury to the memory of John Hampden, who in the time of Charles I. had refused the ship money which that monarch had illegally levied on his subjects. The sum involved was the trifling one of 20s., but, rather than pay it, John Hampden suffered himself to be imprisoned. He was subsequently released without a stain upon his character, and a statue to this rebel stands in no less hallowed a spot than the House of Commons, of which assembly he was a Member.

An application on the part of the Women's Tax-Resistance League of the twentieth century to be officially represented at the unveiling by Lord Rothschild of the statue erected to his memory in Aylesbury was met with a refusal. That the spirit which animated this seventeenth-century fighter

was not, however, dead was evident when, at the conclusion of the official ceremony, a little procession of tax-resisters, supported by men sympathizers, approached the statue and silently laid a wreath at its foot (*Bucks Advertiser*, June 29).

### **The Freedom League and the National Union**

Prominent among those who adopted tax-resistance as a protest against their continued exclusion from the franchise, were members of the Women's Freedom League, which League pursued its anti-Government policy, but which, while waging war on unjust laws, drew the line at destruction of property. Like all other societies, it did an immense amount of educational work, and reported a large increase in its membership. After the defeat of the Conciliation Bill, it organized several formal deputations to Cabinet Ministers, which, however, were not more productive of results than others had been.

The National Union also continued to work indefatigably on its appointed lines, and also reported a large increase of branches and members. In May it decided to support Labour candidates in three-cornered elections, and altogether it took part in twenty-three elections in the year, in some of which the object was to do propaganda work alone. It organized no less than 200 deputations in the course of the year, and also inaugurated the "Friends of Women Suffrage Scheme," the object of which was to enrol sympathizers who could not for some reason be members of Suffrage Societies. By the end of the year, there were 100 branches of this new organization, and 5,000 members in London alone.

### **The Llanystumdwy Outrages**

Throughout the year, interruptions at Cabinet Ministers' meetings had been of almost daily occurrence, and on September 21 a climax was reached at Llanystumdwy, when the Chancellor paid a visit to his constituency to open an institute in that village. It was known that Suffragettes would be

present to question the Chancellor with regard to the political situation, and a band of roughs was ready to deal with the interrupters. Scenes of unsurpassed brutality were witnessed, for the women's clothes were torn from them, their hair was wrenched out in handfuls, they were knocked down and trampled on, and other indignities were perpetrated. The timely arrival of the police apparently prevented the enactment of a tragedy, but no arrests were made.

"There is no country in the world," said Mr. Lloyd George, in the course of his speech, "where political warfare is fought under stricter and more honourable rules of fair play and personal chivalry than in Great Britain," a sentiment which caused the *Globe* of September 23 to say that he must be the most unfortunate of men, since he was unable to gratify his passion for chivalry himself, nor to inspire his followers with the most elementary conception of its nature; and several other papers joined in the chorus of disapproval, while some took the opportunity of lecturing the Suffragettes on the folly of their methods, and others held them entirely responsible.

The incident was the occasion of many questions in Parliament, and after considerable delay one man was arrested, but was subsequently discharged on the ground of insufficient evidence.

### **Women's March from Edinburgh to London**

During the month of October another Women's March was organized. Starting from Edinburgh on October 12, the marchers (the "Brown Women," as they were called, who did not represent any Suffrage organization,) made their way to London, holding numerous meetings on the route, and collecting signatures to a giant petition, which was delivered by the organizer, Mrs. de Fonblanque, in person, at the Prime Minister's official residence, on November 16. She was not privileged to see Mr. Asquith on this occasion, and had to content herself with handing the petition to an under-

secretary. Exigencies of space make it impossible to do more than give this very brief account of an enterprise which absorbed boundless energy and enthusiasm over a prolonged period.

### Another Meeting in the Albert Hall

On October 17 yet another great demonstration under the auspices of the W.S.P.U. took place in the Albert Hall. It was the occasion of Mrs. Pankhurst's first public appearance after her trial, sentence, and subsequent release following on her first hunger strike. She made two announcements of great importance, one that the Union was henceforth in opposition to the Labour and Irish Parties, since they had failed to declare any policy on the subject of Women's Suffrage, the other that, owing to a difference of opinion regarding policy, Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence had left the Union, which henceforth would be guided by herself and her daughter Christabel alone, and the official organ of which would be the *Suffragette*, edited by the latter. This paper embarked that very night on its tumultuous career, and in spite of more than one raid by the Government succeeded in making its appearance regularly every week until the outbreak of war. *Votes for Women* reverted to the control and ownership of Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence.

"I incite this meeting to rebellion," Mrs. Pankhurst declared, amid great applause, and Miss Annie Kenney further specified the forms such rebellion might take, namely, attacks on property, urging those who followed this advice to avoid arrest if possible, and to create an intolerable situation through the length and breadth of the country. Respect for human life was, however, insisted on.

Militancy there accordingly was, of an ever increasingly serious character, for before the end of the year letter-boxes were attacked in great numbers, and thousands of letters were destroyed, or partially destroyed, golf greens were



mutilated, and false fire alarms given. According to the report of the London Fire Brigade, there were 425 malicious calls in 1912, followed by 27 convictions, as compared with 176 in 1906, followed by 22 convictions. (In 1913 there was a still further increase, and a special reward was offered to any person, other than a police officer, giving information which would lead to the conviction of offenders.)

Reports of these outrages came from all parts of the country, but the most significant feature of the situation was that very few arrests were effected. When arrests did take place, severe sentences were inflicted, hunger-striking and forcible feeding followed in due course, and the prisoners were usually released before the expiration of their sentences.

### **Sale at Holmwood**

In October a sale was executed on Holmwood, the country home of Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, to defray the costs of the prosecution in the First Conspiracy trial, which they had refused to pay. In August, while they were still abroad after their imprisonment, the bailiffs took possession of their house, and on the last day of October the contents were sold by public auction, and realized about one-third of the amount required. It was understood that many of the articles were bought by sympathizers, who lent them to their former owners.

### **East End Campaign**

Towards the end of the year Miss Sylvia Pankhurst identified herself more especially with the campaign in the East End of London, which culminated in a great demonstration in Victoria Park on November 10.

The next day Mr. Lansbury announced his intention of seeking re-election from his constituents in Bow and Brmoley on the single issue of Woman's Suffrage. The result of this disinterested action is dealt with in the chapter on by-elections.

### Mr. Snowden's Amendment to the Home Rule Bill

During the year 1912 the question of Home Rule had been constantly before Parliament. On April 11 the Home Rule Bill reached its First Reading, and it was on November 5, while it was in the Committee stage, that Mr. Snowden moved a resolution which had for its object to enable women to vote for the Irish Parliament. With this end in view, Mr. Snowden moved an amendment to substitute "local Government electors" for "same electors"—(*i.e.*, the existing electorate). This register contained the names of some 700,000 electors, of whom roughly 100,000 were women. In support of this proposal, Mr. Snowden argued that the Irish Parliament would not be concerned with the Army and Navy and other Imperial affairs, and that therefore those who considered that women's activities should be confined to Municipal affairs might safely vote for it. He quoted utterances of Mr. Churchill, Mr. Birrell and the Lord Chancellor in support of the view that such a devolution of authority would be a great opportunity for women, and while admitting that the demand for votes for women was not so widespread in Ireland as in other parts of the United Kingdom, he pointed out that at a demonstration recently held in Dublin sixteen societies were represented, and delegates were present from twelve counties. Further, the Labour Party had unanimously passed a resolution in favour of the principle, as had also four County Councils and three City Councils, while all the Nationalist bodies were in favour. He also pointed out that in 1911 the Irish Party in the House had shown a larger percentage in favour of the principle than any other party except the Labour Party. He also reminded the House of the Lord Mayor of Dublin's petition.

The debate was remarkable for the practical absence of all arguments regarding the principle itself, those who took part in it being apparently preoccupied in estimating the effect

the amendment would have upon the fortunes of Home Rule. Thus, it was possible for "friends" of the cause, such as Mr. William Redmond and Mr. Hugh Law, to speak and vote against the amendment, while avowed opponents, such as Mr. Munro Ferguson, voted for it. Indeed, the cross currents at work were manifold and bewildering, and left but little scope for the consideration of the real point at issue. Mr. Birrell announced that the amendment could not be accepted by the Government, and their Whips were put on against it. Mr. Redmond, while professing his personal "devotion" to the cause (a devotion of which, as pointed out by Mr. Roch, he had signally failed to give proof in the voting on the Third Conciliation Bill in March), and appealing for belief in his personal sincerity, urged that this question of all others should be left to the Irish people themselves. This view was upheld by the Prime Minister, who threw the weight of his influence against the amendment. These two speakers, and others who agreed with them, ignored the fact, as pointed out by Lord Robert Cecil, that a Parliament presupposed an electorate, and that the clause under consideration did indeed decide in other respects what that electorate should be. All three speakers on behalf of the Government urged that the real opportunity for deciding the question would occur when the amendments to the Franchise Bill came to be discussed. Sir Alfred Mond and others pointed out that these two statements (that the question should be left to the Irish people, and that the amendments to the Franchise Bill afforded the real opportunity), were mutually destructive, for if the amendments became law, they would in fact be forced upon the Irish people. Again, as Mr. Ronald M'Neill observed, if Mr. Redmond was confident that the Irish Parliament would wish for this innovation, what could be the objection to providing for it in advance?

There were several references to the pressure put upon Irish Members to vote against the Third Conciliation Bill, and the

question was raised by Mr. D. M. Mason, Mr. Roch, and others, whether they would be any more free when the amendments to the Franchise Bill came on for discussion.

When, after about four hours' discussion, the division was taken, the amendment was lost by a majority of 173, for there voted ("that the words proposed to be left out stand part of the question") Ayes 314, Noes 141 (Official Reports, Col. 1060 *et seq.*, Vol. 43). An analysis of the voting is as follows:

	<i>Liberal.</i>	<i>Labour.</i>	<i>Nationalist.</i>	<i>Unionist.</i>
For ..	30	27	5	79
Against ..	173 (83)	5 (5)	71	65 (4)
Absentee	60	6	8	135

The figures in brackets represent "friends."

(*Suffragette*, Vol. I., p. 48.)

### **Another Albert Hall Meeting and other Demonstrations**

The same evening there was another great gathering at the Albert Hall, at which Mrs. Fawcett presided, the proposer and seconder of the Resolution in favour of women's emancipation being Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. W. C. Anderson respectively. The former said that he had just come from the House, and that in spite of the adverse vote there recorded the first thing he had to do was to congratulate the meeting on the steady and continuous advance of the cause of Woman's Suffrage.

There were some, however, who did not see in the situation cause for congratulation. That night another window-smashing raid took place in London, and isolated acts of defiance, most of them never traced to the perpetrator, occurred henceforth with ever increasing frequency.



## APPENDIX TO PART IV

**Prisoners (England and Wales) Additional Rule for Treatment of Offenders of the Second and Third Division (Rule 243A)**

In pursuance of the power conferred on me by the Prisons Act of 1898, I hereby make the following rule, to be added after Rule 243 of the rules for local prisons, made April 21, 1899.

In the case of any offender of the Second or Third Division whose previous character is good, and who has been convicted of, or committed to prison for, an offence not involving dishonesty, cruelty, indecency, or serious violence, the Prison Commissioners may allow such amelioration of the conditions prescribed in the foregoing rules as the Secretary of State may approve, in respect of the wearing of prison clothing, bathing, hair-cutting, cleaning of cells, employment, exercise, books, and otherwise.

Provided that no such amelioration shall be greater than that granted under the rules for offenders of the First Division.

**Representation of the People Bills, 1910 and 1911**

(1) Every woman possessed of a household qualification, of a ten pound occupation qualification, within the meaning of the Representation of the People Act (1884), shall be entitled to be registered as a voter, and when registered to vote for the county or borough in which the qualifying premises are situate.

(2) For the purposes of this Act, a woman shall not be disqualified by marriage for being registered as a voter, provided that a husband and wife shall not both

- (a) be qualified in respect of the same property (1910);
- (b) be registered as voters in the same Parliamentary borough or county division (1911).

**Wording of the Resolution Passed by the Australian Senate  
on November 17, 1910**

“That this Senate is of opinion that the extension of the Suffrage to the women of Australia for States and Commonwealth Parliaments, on the same terms as men, has had the most beneficial results. It has led to the more orderly conduct of elections, and at the last Federal Elections the women’s vote in the majority of the States showed a greater proportionate increase than that cast by men. It has given a greater prominence to legislation particularly affecting women and children, although the women have not taken up such questions to the exclusion of others of wider significance. In matters of defence and Imperial concern they have proved themselves as far-seeing and discriminating as men. Because the reform has brought nothing but good, though disaster was freely prophesied, we respectfully urge that all nations enjoying representative government would be well advised in granting votes to women.”

## PART V

### *THE CAMPAIGN OF ARSON : OPERATION OF THE CAT AND MOUSE ACT*

(1913-1914)

1913

#### **Deputation of Working Women to Mr. Lloyd George and Sir E. Grey.**

EARLY in the year, Mrs. Drummond requested an interview of the Prime Minister on behalf of a deputation of working women who desired to lay their case in person before him. The interview was refused by the Prime Minister, but Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey consented to receive the deputation on January 23, the number to be limited to twenty. Accordingly, on that day Mrs. Drummond and Miss Annie Kenney, accompanied by eighteen working women, who had been gathered from all parts of the country, and who represented teachers, nurses, tailoresses, factory hands, laundresses, fisherwomen, pit-brow workers, shop assistants, domestic workers, and workers from the East End, had an audience of Mr. Lloyd George at the Treasury. All but six of the deputation spoke, and in moving and unstudied language voiced the demand of their fellow-women for political enfranchisement. They described how some of them had to work, in order to add five or six shillings to the family weekly income, pointing out how in numberless cases, when the work at the factory or mill was finished, the woman worker had then to attend to

household duties. One woman, a fishwife from Newhaven, Scotland, said: "Give me my vote, Mr. Lloyd George; I've come 400 miles to get it." Another, a pit-brow lassie, spoke for her comrades. Well was she qualified to do so, this quiet little woman, in her quaint costume and clogs, who is known in her neighbourhood as the Florence Nightingale of the Hulton mine, for did she not on the occasion of a terrible disaster work for sixty hours without intermission, rendering help to her stricken neighbours?

Mrs. Drummond and Miss Kenney took advantage of the occasion to tell the Chancellor some very plain things as to the Government's handling of the question, and he in reply reaffirmed the statement that the Prime Minister would keep his pledge in the spirit as well as in the letter. He also announced the intention of himself and other supporters of Woman's Suffrage to vote for the Dickinson Amendment to the Reform Bill, or, failing that, for the Conciliation Amendment, though it was not one that he personally liked.

Sir Edward Grey, who came in late, and after all the women had spoken, endorsed all that the Chancellor had said about the fairness of the present opportunity, promised that he, too, would vote for the Dickinson Amendment, but warned the deputation of the formidable opposition that remained to be overcome. On securing a promise that Mr. Lloyd George would receive another deputation after the fate of the amendments had been decided, the women withdrew.

### **The Speaker's Ruling concerning the Reform Bill.**

Four hours after the event just recorded, a new and startling complexion was given to the situation by reason of what transpired in the House. When the business of the House was being discussed, Mr. Bonar Law (who on the Second Reading of the Reform Bill had proclaimed himself in favour of a modified extension of the Suffrage to women) arose and submitted that the amendments would so alter the character of



the Bill that a new one would have to be substituted. The Speaker expressed his obligations to Mr. Law, and said that while "Heaven only knew" in what shape the Bill would emerge from Committee, on general principles, if amendments were made which materially affected the form of a Bill, it would have to be withdrawn and a new Bill introduced.

Later, when allocation of time was under discussion, the Premier made an announcement as to the position of the Government, and pointed out once more the obligation they were under to give precedence to Woman Suffrage amendments. He indicated the order in which they would be dealt with, as follows:

1. An amendment standing in the name of the Secretary for Foreign Affairs, to delete the word "male," which, if carried, would have left the coast clear for one or other of the remaining three. On the other hand, if it had failed, it would have ruled all these out of order.

2. One standing in the name of Mr. Arthur Henderson, to insert the words "of either sex" after the word "person," which, in the Premier's phrase, would have "assimilated" men and women, and which, it was calculated, would have added to the register a number of women variously estimated to be between eleven and thirteen millions.

3. One standing in the name of Mr. Dickinson, on the lines of the Norwegian franchise, which would have enfranchised women over twenty-five years of age if inhabitant occupiers or the wives of such, and which it was calculated would have added six million women to the register.

4. One standing in the name of the Hon. A. Lyttelton, commonly called the "Conciliation Amendment," which would have had the effect of enfranchising some one and a half million women.

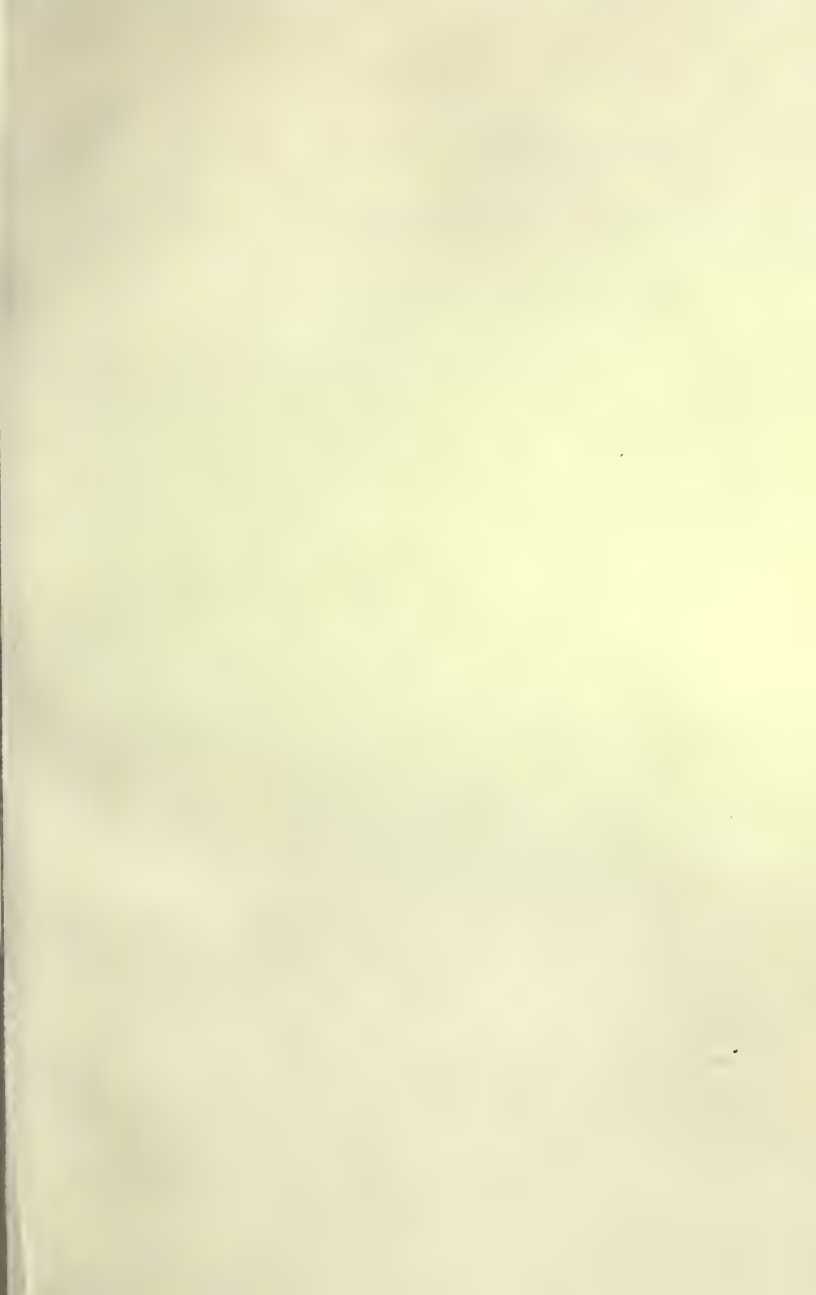
A discussion followed, in the course of which Lord Robert Cecil said that the Third Conciliation Bill had been defeated largely because the true opportunity of dealing with the

question was thought to lie with these amendments. "This is a Government Bill," he said, "and the Government is in charge of the honour of the House, and especially of the honour of the Premier." Mr. F. E. Smith, as an avowed opponent of the cause, thought it was incumbent on the Government to acquaint themselves with the necessary formalities of the House, so as to be in a position to "deliver the goods." He wished the subject to be thoroughly discussed, and defeated once for all. Mr. Lloyd George quoted precedents of previous extensions of the franchise, and maintained that the Bill was so drafted that the question did come within its scope. After several other Members had spoken, and a motion to omit the words about giving precedence to the amendments had been lost, the subject was dropped.

### Committee Stage

The following day the Committee stage was entered upon, and after some preliminary and inconclusive discussion between Mr. Lloyd George, the chairman (Mr. Whitley), and others, as to whether or not the amendments were in order, the House settled down to consider Sir Edward Grey's amendment, to delete the word "male." The Secretary for Foreign Affairs was not present to move the amendment standing in his name, and the duty devolved on the Hon. A. Lyttelton, who made a weak and somewhat contradictory speech. While he commented with approval on the valuable work done by women on Commissions, and in the political sphere generally, he expressed his personal regret that such wide assistance should have been asked of them; and whilst pointing out that consent was at the back and root of modern democracy, and that good government consisted in ascertaining the general wish, and in satisfying the aspirations of every section of the community, he also said that the amendment only meant that the subject was worthy of discussion.

The amendment was opposed by Mr. Lewis Harcourt in a





### RAG-TIME IN THE HOUSE.

[Sir EDWARD GALT'S Woman Suffrage Amendment produced some curious partnerships.]

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speech which Mr. F. E. Smith described as "excellent and witty," and which called forth from Lord Hugh Cecil the taunt that he appeared to have an extraordinary quarrel with the female sex in general, so much so that he might have been recently spanked, and that he appeared never to have got over the indignity of having been born of a woman.

Mr. McCurdy, in a vigorous speech, recapitulated the various pledges given by the Premier, and dwelt especially upon the various influences at work which prevented Liberals, particularly, from casting their votes on the merits of the question.

In all, thirteen speeches were made in the course of this unreal debate (for it must be borne in mind that at this stage the Speaker's ruling had not been given), and the familiar ground was once more traversed. Two new points were, however, introduced—namely, whether the Parliament Act could rightly be applied in this instance, and the possibilities of a Cabinet crisis arising if any of the other three amendments were to pass.

Militancy was frequently referred to in terms of severe disapprobation, this being extended in some cases to the brutality and cruelty which had been meted out to the militants. The Referendum was hailed by more than one speaker as the ideal solution of the vexed question. There was an occasional hint of the possibility of voting for the elimination of the word "male," but not for any of the other three amendments, a proceeding which one speaker likened to the character in one of George Eliot's novels, who had a general knowledge of Latin, but found insuperable difficulties over individual words. The debate was adjourned at 11 p.m. till the following Monday.

### **Withdrawal of the Reform Bill**

On that day, January 27, the proceedings opened by Mr. Asquith asking the Speaker to indicate which, if any, of the amendments proposed regarding "what is called Woman Suffrage" would at report and subsequent stages effect such

a transformation, or such a fundamental alteration, as to bring the Bill within the practice to which he (the Speaker) had referred. In reply, the Speaker said that the proper time to answer such a question would have been after the Committee stage, but that it would doubtless be for the convenience of the House if he stated his views, which were as follows: If "male" were omitted, leaving "person," it would not make any difference, as in Franchise Acts "person" always meant "male person." But if any one of the other three amendments were carried, he should advise the withdrawal of the Bill, as it would be so altered as to be practically a new one, *it not having been designed* to open the franchise to any fresh class of the community. Leave to introduce the Bill did not contain the new principle involved, and it was not assented to on the Second Reading.

Mr. Asquith thanked the Speaker for stepping for the moment outside strict procedure, and thus saving the House from a waste of valuable time. He stated that the Government had studied the precedents of 1867 and 1884, and had thought the amendments were quite in order. The Speaker's ruling had thus taken them entirely by surprise. He did not criticize it, but would accept it loyally and without reserve. It, clearly, could not have been altogether such a surprise, for before resuming his seat Mr. Asquith added that, in view of the special pledges and undertakings given by the Government on the question, he and his colleagues did not think it would be right to proceed with the Bill. They therefore proposed to offer facilities for a Private Member's Bill in the following Session, which should be capable of amendment, and as to which Members of the Government should be free to vote at every stage as they saw fit. He concluded with an expression of deep regret that the matter had not been brought to an issue, and moved: "That the order be discharged and the Bill withdrawn."

A curious debate followed, which lasted nearly five hours.

Although the motion before the House was the one just quoted, few speakers indicated whether they were in favour of it or no. Only three of the sixteen who followed the Premier made it quite clear that they were opposed to Woman's Suffrage, while those who expressed approval of the Premier's motion, including Mr. Lloyd George, Sir Edward Grey, and Sir William Byles, did so as "friends" of the cause, and were enthusiastic as to the far better chance which the Government's new offer of a Private Member's Bill afforded. Although the Speaker pointed out that speeches in favour of, or opposed to, any of the amendments were out of order, these continued to be debated, and much time was taken up in discussing whether the proposed Private Member's Bill should have the benefit of the Parliament Act or no, and to what extent it should be treated as a Government measure, references to past intrigues being pointed and plentiful. Mr. Lloyd George met every objection raised to the new proposal, and asserted emphatically that it offered by far the best method of dealing with the question, and the only one available, in view of the Speaker's ruling. He declared that *during the last few weeks* it had become evident that the amendments did not provide a clear issue on the subject, and promised that the Government would assist a Private Member's Bill in the matter of providing the necessary time. He was heartily supported by Sir Edward Grey. (This statement may be compared with that quoted on p. 234.)

Mr. Keir Hardie expressed his utter distrust of the promise now made, in view of the levity displayed, and openly accused the Premier of a breach of faith, though, as he said, as recently as the previous Saturday he had defended him against imputations of dishonesty. If a Government Bill had not escaped the rocks of Parliamentary procedure, what hope was there, he asked, of a Private Member's Bill? The question had already progressed far, he further asserted, when it had succeeded in defeating a Government Bill. He feared that "real militant tactics" would now be witnessed.



On the motion being put to the vote, it was carried by a majority of 171 (Ayes, 283; Noes, 112). Mr. Asquith, Sir Edward Grey, and Mr. Churchill, abstained from voting, but the Premier's motion was supported by most of the other Ministers (Official Reports, vol. 47).

### Reception of the Decision

The immediate effect of these proceedings was such as to cause practically all Suffrage societies to unite in demanding a Government measure, this being regarded as the only possible solution of the question. In a manifesto issued by the National Union, the offer of a Private Member's Bill was characterized, as "wholly inadequate to meet the situation," and it was pointed out that nothing could now redeem the Premier's pledges except the introduction of a Government measure. The newly formed Federated Council of Suffrage Societies, at an emergency meeting, unanimously passed a resolution expressing "strong indignation" at the Government's failure to redeem its pledges; the New Constitutional Society passed one expressing "keen regret" at the betrayal of the Women's Cause; while other societies condemned the Parliamentary mismanagement of the question in similar terms.

On January 13 Mrs. Pankhurst had announced on behalf of the W.S.P.U. that there would be a cessation of all militancy until the fate of the amendments was decided. Now, in accordance with its motto, "Deeds, not words," this society decided to express its indignation in its own way. Large public meetings had been held throughout these fateful days at various halls in London, and news was brought from time to time to these assemblies of the progress of events in Parliament. Speaking at the usual weekly meeting at the Pavilion on the Monday afternoon (January 27), Mrs. Pankhurst said that the Union had predicted all that had happened, that for years past it had demanded a Government measure as the only possible means of securing the enfranchisement of women,



and added these words: "Either we must have a Government measure, or those men who call themselves Woman Suffragists in the Cabinet must go out, or we take up the sword again, never to lay it down until the enfranchisement of the women of this country is won." She then referred to the disadvantage at which women stood in being opposed by the forces of organized government, and cited the cases of Garibaldi, the Duke of Brunswick, the rebels of Mexico, and others who had striven for their liberty against overwhelming odds. She added: "It is guerrilla warfare that we declare this afternoon." At the Holborn Town Hall the same evening the same note was sounded, and Mrs. Pankhurst announced her determination of being militant herself, and urged others to do likewise. "One thing," she said, "we regard as sacred, and that is human life. But with that exception we are justified in using all the methods resorted to in time of war."

The following day, speaking at the Horticultural Hall, she said she had information, on which she relied, that the whole plot had been decided on long ago, even to the Speaker's ruling. With the remark that the time for speeches had gone by, she reiterated that the reply of the Union to the trickery which had been practised must be militancy.

### **Mrs. Drummond Leads another Deputation**

Militancy there accordingly was, of increasing frequency and of an increasingly serious character. First of all, Mrs. Drummond immediately claimed the fulfilment of Mr. Lloyd George's promise to receive her deputation again, and, indignantly rejecting his offer to receive two or three members only in private, she set forth on the Tuesday evening to make good her claim to be received in audience, with a determined band of supporters. They were permitted to make their way as far as Parliament Square, where they were stopped by a police officer and advised to withdraw. On their refusing to do so, Mrs. Drummond and about thirty other women were

arrested on the charge of "obstruction," Mrs. Drummond herself being treated with great roughness by the police. The next day she was ordered to pay a fine of 40s. and 7s. 6d, for doctor's attendance, and on refusing to do so was given fourteen days in the Second Division. She was, however, released at the end of one day, as some unknown person was said to have paid her fine.

Of her companions, twenty-nine in number, many of whom were arrested for window-breaking, the majority received comparatively lenient sentences, varying from seven days to one month. Those committed for trial were sentenced to terms of imprisonment varying from three to six months. Some of those arrested were never sentenced, some, like Mrs. Drummond, had their fines paid by unknown persons, while others duly served their sentences. Several of those sentenced were released, for one reason or another, before the expiration of their sentences, and two or three were still in prison when the Cat and Mouse Act (of which much will be said presently) came into force.

While the authorities were thus occupied with those who had deliberately brought themselves within reach of the law, militancy of an increasingly serious character was rife throughout the country.

### **The Campaign of Arson Inaugurated**

Up to this point there had been isolated cases of arson, done more or less on the responsibility of individuals. Now, when the valuelessness of pledges given several years beforehand, and many times repeated, was manifest, the agitation took on a far more serious phase. Militants were of opinion that it was militancy which had brought the question into the realm of practical politics, and decided that there must be no going back. Remembering that in the past they had been taunted with using "pin-pricks," and when possible had been ignored, or, on the other hand, had been treated with the utmost rigour,

they determined now to engage in militancy of a kind that would produce the maximum effect compatible with the retention of their individual liberty for as long as possible. With this deliberate twofold intention the campaign of arson began.

To gain an idea of what took place, we may see what the *Morning Post* of April 14 had to say on the subject two or three months later: "Since the campaign of destruction was resumed in January, there has been a steady increase in regard to raiding of pillar-boxes, false fire-alarms, etc. . . . Yet not half a dozen arrests altogether have been made for these offences, totalling thousands in number." It then proceeded to give a list of the graver crimes, thirty-two in number, which had taken place that year, up to that date, and pointed out that on only four occasions had arrests been effected, and that the number of convictions in connection with these outrages was three only. The damage was in some cases estimated to be as much as £4,000, the total being estimated at over £15,000.

It may be interesting here to see how far the law was successful in dealing with these few delinquents arrested.

Of the two arrested in connection with the burning of the Kew Pavilion, on February 20, one, Miss Lilian Lenton (of whom there will be more to say presently), was released, after forcible feeding, while a prisoner on remand; and the other, after carrying out a secret hunger strike for thirty-one days, at the end of which time she was too weak to be forcibly fed, and was released after serving one month of the eighteen to which she had been sentenced. This prisoner was also ordered to pay the cost of the proceedings, and to be imprisoned for a further period, "not exceeding twelve months," in default of sureties when she came out of prison.

A Suffragette arrested on the Wimbledon tennis-ground under suspicious circumstances refused her name and all information about herself, and was sentenced on March 4 to two months' imprisonment, of which she served one, forcible



feeding being employed nearly the whole time, but failing of its object.

The only one who served her sentence was the Suffragette who was sentenced to four months' imprisonment on April 4, in connection with an attempted outrage at Roehampton (see p. 286).

Small wonder that the authorities came to the conclusion that the law needed strengthening in order to cope with prisoners such as these. How this was done, and with what success, still remains to be told.

So much, too, for the "graver crimes," which by no means represented the whole extent of the damage done. Perhaps the things which most exasperated the public were the attacks on golf-courses throughout the country, and the wholesale damage to letters. (In the course of the Conspiracy trial it was stated by the prosecution that 560 letter-boxes had been attacked and 8,400 letters damaged.) Telephone and telegraph wires were also damaged, telegraphic communication between London and Glasgow being interrupted for some hours on February 8. The *Morning Post* of March 3 recounts that at Pontypool an order was received calling up the reserves, on which action was taken before it was discovered to be a hoax. This was attributed to Suffragettes. There were also comparatively harmless but exceedingly annoying deeds attributed to them, such as the stopping up of keyholes and the painting out of house numbers.

### **Arrest of Mrs. Pankhurst**

The authorities were not, however, long in laying hands on Mrs. Pankhurst, who had openly assumed all responsibility for all deeds connected with the militant movement, short of the taking of life. She was arrested on February 24, soon after a bomb explosion at a house in course of erection for the Chancellor of the Exchequer at Walton Heath, and was charged under the Malicious Injury to Property Act, with having



conspired with some person or persons unknown to commit the act. She was committed for trial at the Guildford Summer Assizes, and, on refusing to give an "undertaking" for so long a period as that intervening before the Assizes were held, bail was refused, and she was taken to Holloway.

Arrived there, she adopted the hunger strike, with the result that it was hastily arranged that she should stand her trial at the Old Bailey on April 1. Mrs. Pankhurst thereupon gave the required undertaking, and on February 27 she was released on bail for the intervening month. She was not debarred from speaking during that period, provided her speeches were not of an "inciting" character.

Four royal palaces, Kensington, Hampton Court, Kew, and Holyrood, were closed to the public early in February, following on the smashing of a case in the Jewel-Room of the Tower, and great uneasiness, to say the least of it, prevailed among those responsible for museums and galleries generally. A special guard was set on Nottingham Castle (*Times*, April 7), to which so many references had been made (see p. 194).

### **"The Cabinette"**

We must now return to the Parliamentary aspect of the situation. During the days immediately succeeding the withdrawal of the Reform Bill, several questions were asked in the House as to the formation of the proposed Committee to deal with the question (the "Cabinette," as it was derisively called), the facilities which the proposed Bill would enjoy, and so on. Replies of a non-committal character were made on behalf of the Government, Mr. Asquith saying on one occasion that such questions dealt with a "prospective and contingent future." Sir John Simon was elected Chairman of the Liberal Committee of Suffragists.

Questions had also been frequently asked both as to the steps being taken to put a stop to the outrages and as to the treatment of Suffragettes in prison. The release of this and

that prisoner, and the taking of finger-prints (which Mr. McKenna stated had been attempted at the instance of the Commissioner of Police for the City of London), were also subjects of inquiry, while the suggestion that hunger strikers should be kept alive by rubbing them with dugong oil was one among many signs that the authorities were at their wits' end to know how to deal with the situation.

### **Motion for the Reduction of the Home Secretary's Salary**

On March 18, during the debate on the Civil Service Estimates, Mr. Harold Smith moved the reduction of £100 in the Home Secretary's salary, because of the "ineptitude and inefficiency of his administration." In the discussion which followed, twenty-one other Members also took part, and Mr. McKenna was subjected to a bitter attack from members of all parties, who chose to hold him responsible for the unparalleled situation, many averring that it was the lack of firmness (or, as one Member expressed it, the "humility") which the Government had exhibited towards Suffragettes which had led to the impasse. Three alternatives for dealing with hunger strikers were suggested, and each received a certain amount of support, Mr. Keir Hardie being the only one to point out that the only way of ending the strife was to bring in a Votes for Women measure. The three alternatives were:

1. Leaving the prisoners to die (favoured by several Members).
2. Deportation (suggested by Lord Robert Cecil).
3. Letting them out on licence (Mr. McKenna's idea).

There were many references to the case of Miss Lilian Lenton, a prisoner who, while on remand, had been released by order of the Home Secretary, since forcible feeding had been followed by most alarming symptoms. Most of the speakers commented on the extreme difficulty of the situation, and Mr. McKenna, in his defence, called for special consideration on this account. He argued that the cases in which the law had

not met the situation were very few in number, and produced figures in support of this contention (figures which some mathematically minded Members worked out to be 28 per cent. for the year 1912 and 12 per cent. for the nine weeks of the current year); but said that the fact had to be faced that the women were ready for martyrdom. He stated that the authorities were trying by the exercise of "forbearance, patience, and humanity, slowly but surely to break down the movement." He utterly declined to leave the prisoners to die, for whereas other speakers were of the opinion that his (the Home Secretary's) responsibility ended in providing food, or that one death in prison would be sufficient, he himself believed that thirty, forty, or even fifty other women would immediately come forward. With regard to forcible feeding (as to which many awkward questions were asked, and very great disapprobation expressed), he stated that the Law Officers of the Crown agreed with the Judge in the case of *Leigh v. Gladstone*, but he declined to state explicitly what their opinion was. Finally he hinted that further legislation was under contemplation, which he believed would be thoroughly effective. Several Members expressed the opinion that every suggestion hitherto made would only make matters worse, one betrayed curiosity to know what the exact position of the Home Secretary would be if a death should occur in prison, and Mr. Ellis Griffith doubted if any kind of punishment was capable of stopping or curing the movement. Other matters having been discussed, the motion was defeated by a majority of 114 (Official Report, Col. 873 *et seq.*, Vol. 50).

### Miss Lenton's Case

Some details of the remarkable case which was mainly responsible for focussing the attention of Members of Parliament on the horrors and dangers of forcible feeding will not be out of place here.

On February 20, Miss Lenton was committed to Holloway as



a remand prisoner, in consequence of her connection with the Kew outrage, already referred to. Two days later she was seen by her solicitor, who reported that she was in good health and spirits, although she had been fasting since her arrest. The very next day she was hastily released, being then, in the Home Secretary's phrase, in "imminent danger of death," her temperature being 102°. She herself made a sworn statement describing the struggle she had had that Sunday with two doctors and seven wardresses, while forcible feeding was administered, and the alarming symptoms which followed. In any case, these were sufficient to procure her immediate release, and her own doctor found her to be suffering from pleurisy, the result of food having penetrated into the lung. It was emphatically denied by the Home Secretary on more than one occasion in the House that this was the case (March 13 and 18). Full details are given in a letter to *The Times*, March 18, from Sir Victor Horsley.

Miss Lenton's subsequent movements, as far as they were made public, were as follows: Her rearrest was not effected until October 7, when she was once more taken before the Richmond magistrate, who had been greatly incensed by the action of the Home Secretary and the Governor of Holloway for having ordered her release in February, and she was once more remanded in custody. Forcible feeding was again tried, but did not suffice to keep her more than eight days in prison. She again disappeared.

Meanwhile, on June 10, she had given herself up to the police at Doncaster under another name, they having wrongfully arrested another woman in connection with an outrage there. She was released on June 17 after another hunger strike, and was reported by the newspapers to have disappeared in the disguise of a van boy.

In May of the following year she was rearrested in connection with this affair, when, presumably acting on the supposition that a convicted prisoner would be safer in prison than one on remand, the trial took place at the Leeds Assizes within four



days—*i.e.*, on May 8—and a sentence of twelve months' imprisonment was duly pronounced. Four days of this sentence only were served, as forcible feeding again failed of its object. The police were unremitting in their watch on the house in Harrogate to which she was removed, and motors stood ready for pursuit night and day. One evening over forty women entered the house heavily veiled, and shortly afterwards quickly left it again, and ran in all directions on leaving the front door. For some time afterwards the detectives continued to guard the house, but nothing more was seen or heard of the "elusive Suffragette."

**Prisoners (Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health) Bill—  
"Cat and Mouse Bill"**

It was not long before the further legislation at which Mr. McKenna had hinted on March 18 began to be framed. Within a week from the day that he had to acknowledge that existing laws were insufficient to cope with the situation, he introduced the Bill bearing the above title, the terms of which will be found at the end of Part V. Briefly, the object of the Bill was to provide for the rearrest of prisoners who were discharged owing to the adoption of the hunger strike, and thus to compel them to serve their sentences. No debate took place on the occasion of the First Reading (March 25).

**Second Reading**

This took place on April 2, in a full House, and Mr. McKenna, in his introductory speech, said that, judging by the tone and temper of the debate just referred to, he felt confident of receiving the support necessary to carry it through. He said that the circumstances of the day were unprecedented; that the adoption of the hunger strike had rendered existing laws inadequate; and that an alternative method was needed to the practice of forcible feeding, which was undoubtedly objectionable both to those who suffered and to those who administered it. He said it might still be necessary in certain

circumstances, citing the hypothetical case of a murderer who went on hunger strike while appealing. Mr. McCurdy then arose and made an energetic protest against the Bill, declaring that the women had not been fairly dealt by, that their defences had not been reported in the papers, that they had been forced into illegal courses during the last seven or eight years by the stoppage of constitutional avenues, and, lastly, that the remedy was easily within the reach of the Government, and if applied would render the Bill unnecessary. He was enumerating some of the leading facts in the history of the movement when, after having several times been called to order by the Speaker, he was requested by the latter to resume his seat. Mr. Keir Hardie thereupon moved the amendment: "That this House declines to proceed with any measure for strengthening the law against hunger strikers . . . until the Premier redeems his pledge that the Government will make itself responsible for the further progress of any Woman Suffrage measure which passes its Second Reading by a free vote of the House of Commons." He referred sympathetically to the difficulties of the Home Secretary, but pointed out that Clause 1 (1) gave him very dangerous powers, and that Clause 1 (2) was not likely to be respected. He echoed much that Mr. McCurdy had said, and was formally seconded by Mr. Thomas Richardson. In the debate which followed, hostility to the Bill was expressed by five other Members, including Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Atherley Jones, the latter making a notable contribution to the debate from the point of view of a constitutional lawyer, with "some experience of criminal law," as he modestly put it, his remarks being frequently interrupted by the Home Secretary. He pointed out that there was absolutely no precedent in the penology of this or of any other country for the Bill, which violated a cardinal principle of the country's law, in that it prolonged indefinitely the term of imprisonment—a Bill which, in his opinion, was in its general principle entirely contrary to the

principle of criminal administration. He criticized the Bill in certain details, characterized the methods contemplated as "cruel and capricious," and prophesied its probable futility. He was careful to add that his attitude was not influenced by sympathy for the Suffragettes.

Even those who supported the Bill, such as Mr. Charles Roberts and others, while insisting that the law must be strengthened, were by no means sanguine as to the ultimate success of the measure; and other possible expedients, such as deportation, once more found both advocates and opponents. Discussion of the "conditions" of release were postponed to the Committee stage, and, Mr. Keir Hardie's amendment having been rejected amid laughter, the Bill passed its Second Reading by the substantial majority of 253 (Ayes, 296; Noes, 43). (Official Reports, Col. 404 *et seq.*, Vol. 51).

"Better late than never," said *The Times* in its leading article of the following day. "Better late than never, but Mr. McKenna ought to have introduced his Bill long ago. . . . The expedient may fail . . . but at any rate it is worth a trial, pending the discovery of something more effective. Our own impression is that a hunger strike on the proposed terms will lose most of its charms" (*sic*).

### Committee Stage

The Committee stage occupied part of three days, April 8, 9, and 21, the interval of twelve days between the two latter dates occurring in the middle of the debate on one of the amendments. This amendment provoked the most discussion of any, being one moved by Sir A. Cripps (now Lord Parmoor), to insert the words "on licence" after the word "prisoner," in 1 (1). Mr. McKenna produced the form of licence he proposed to use, a copy of which is also appended at the end of Part V., but steadily declined to have those conditions incorporated in the Act, giving the urgency of the measure, and the extra time that would be needed to include these conditions,



as his chief reason for objecting. He was anxious, he said, to get rid of the necessity of forcible feeding as soon as possible. He promised to lay on the table any variation from the conditions, as then drafted, and cheerily informed the mover of the amendment that he might possibly see shortly "some novel conditions in the case of particular prisoners" laid on the table. The amendment was lost, and the conditions of release were thus left entirely to the discretion of the Home Secretary and his successors.

In all, seventeen amendments were moved; but though among those who took part in the debate the opponents were more than twice as numerous as the supporters of the Government, the Whips were put on, and in every case the voting gave the Government a substantial majority. Six of the amendments were withdrawn, and, of the remainder, eight were carried to a division. Twelve times in all did the Members walk the division lobbies during the wearisome discussion, and the last time, towards 1 a.m., only twelve Members recorded their vote against the Government. (The suspension of the eleven o'clock rule had been moved by Mr. Lloyd George at the commencement of the evening's proceedings.) Among those most vigorous in suggesting mitigations in the severity of the Act were Sir A. Markham, Mr. Hume Williams, Mr. R. M'Neill, Mr. McCurdy, and Mr. Keir Hardie. As an instance of the want of sense of proportion displayed, it may be recorded that one amendment, moved by Sir F. Banbury, was to delete the word "own" in 1 (1), it being argued, not without reason, that somebody else's conduct could hardly be involved. But Mr. Ellis Griffith maintained that it was a word of emphasis such as a person would use in referring to his own umbrella. The question was solemnly put that the word "own" should stand part of the clause, and a no less solemn procession was made to the division lobbies to settle this momentous question. On the other hand, the much more important amendment moved by Mr. Hume Williams, to add



a proviso to 1 (1) that the prisoner shall be "under the supervision of a person named in the order, whose duty it shall be to report to the Secretary of State as provided in the said order," was negatived without a division, for Mr. McKenna pointed out that if it were accepted, they would be adding to the sentence imposed by the Court, a thing he repeatedly stated it was not the object of the Bill to do.

Early in the last day's debate, Mr. Atherley Jones made one more weighty speech. He said the way the Bill had been dealt with so far was an illustration of the familiar process: "When there is an undue strain of a temporary character upon the existing law, there is always a cry for fresh legislation to strengthen the law, and to do so at the expense of the principles which governed the former law." He took special exception to the conditions of release being left to the discretion of the Home Secretary, and was particularly insistent to know whether the latter retained the power and the intention of applying forcible feeding. It was made abundantly clear in the course of the discussion that such was indeed the case, although it was urged by several Members that public opinion would not stand it.

Several references were made as to the desirability of having the opinion of the Law Officers of the Crown, in a matter which so intimately affected the liberty of the subject. The only one to offer any contribution to the debate was the Solicitor-General, Sir John Simon, who was called upon to elucidate the following utterance of the Home Secretary's, which Sir A. Markham and others protested they could not understand: "I said that the insertion of these words [2 (2)] left the law precisely where it stood. It is not the same thing to say that, if the Bill passes without these words, the law will be the same as it was before. By the insertion of these words, we leave the law exactly where it stands now before the passing of the Bill" (Official Reports, Col. 203, Vol. 52). Sir John Simon's explanation of this clause being apparently more

satisfactory than the above, the Committee stage was concluded shortly afterwards. Clause 1 (4), which referred to prisoners on remand, was not discussed at all (Official Reports, Vol. 51, 52).

### Third Reading

No amendment having been accepted, there was no report stage, and the Bill reached its Third Reading two days later—*i.e.*, on April 23. On this occasion only seven speeches were made, four of which, including one from Mr. Keir Hardie, emphatically condemned the Bill. It was urged that it would be futile; that it was a cruel remedy, and one which would be additional, not alternative, to the practice of forcible feeding; that it constituted a violation of the practice hitherto obtaining, and of the law of the land; and that it provided great opportunities of abuse of the power of rearrest. In defence of the Bill it was, however, urged that the existing law was insufficient, that the Bill would vindicate the law and insure that sooner or later the sentences imposed by the Courts would be carried out, and, lastly, that there was no other suggested alternative.

The Bill passed its Third Reading by a majority of 238 (Ayes, 294; Noes. 56). (Official Report, Col. 392 *et seq.*, Vol. 52.)

### Concluding Stages

On the same day (April 23), the Bill was read for the first time in the House of Lords, and on the day following, all the remaining stages in that assembly were concluded, Standing Order 39 being specially considered and dispensed with, in order to make this possible. Only two speeches were made at the Second Reading—one by Lord Haldane, who asserted that the Bill would “deal effectively” with the situation; and the other by Lord Salisbury, who disclaimed all responsibility for the Bill, and said that his party only consented with great reluctance to the course which was being taken, having nothing better to suggest. There was no division (Official Reports [Lords], Vol. 14).

The following day (April 25) the Bill received the Royal Assent. Thus, in the space of less than one month a Parliament, which had frequently urged want of time as the reason which made it impossible to deal with the question of Women's Enfranchisement, found time to pass through all its stages a measure which, in Mr. Atherley Jones' phrase, was "entirely contrary to the principle of criminal administration." How far it was successful in accomplishing its avowed objects of enforcing punishment, and of deterring others from the commission of crimes, will be apparent in due course.

This Act is commonly known as the "Cat and Mouse Act," being referred to by that title by no less a person than Mr. McKenna in the House, on June 11, 1914, and as such it will be referred to in these pages.

### **Mrs. Pankhurst's Trial (Second Conspiracy Trial)**

Meanwhile Mrs. Pankhurst's trial had duly taken place at the Old Bailey on April 2 and 3, before Mr. Justice Lush. The charge was one of "counselling, procuring, inciting, and commanding certain persons unknown" to place explosives in the house which was being built for Mr. Lloyd George at Walton Heath. Mr. Bodkin and Mr. Travers Humphreys conducted the prosecution on behalf of the Crown, and Mrs. Pankhurst conducted her own defence.

The case for the prosecution was that the defendant was an accessory before the fact, it not being suggested that she was present when the crime was carried out, but that her responsibility was proved by certain statements she had made on various occasions, extracts being read at length from her speeches between the dates January 21 and February 21. Portions of these speeches are as follows:

"I feel strongly that the breaking of the law and the disorganizing of the arrangements of society are only justifiable and excusable when there is a good cause." And, after outlining the demands of the Union, she added: "These are our



conditions and demands, and unless we get a Government measure, or unless the so-called Suffragists, Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Grey, resign, then we take up the sword again, never to lay it down until the enfranchisement of women in this country is won. So long as we thought we could win our cause by constitutional means, we avoided militancy. . . . We are engaged in warfare, and if we are to succeed it must be guerrilla warfare. We have to replace force with women's wit; we must take the enemy unawares." (At Palmer's Green, January 21.)

"For all women have done up to now, and for what women will do in the future, short of taking human life, I take full responsibility. . . . So long as I am at liberty, I shall be plotting and planning and arranging with my colleagues every item in this campaign." (At the London Pavilion, February 3.)

"We have blown up the Chancellor's house. . . . The authorities need not look for the women who have done what they did last night. I accept responsibility for it, and I tell you this, you people who think that this agitation can be put down by force . . . government rests upon consent; and if the weakest woman in our Movement withholds her consent to government, not all the powers on earth can govern her. . . . If I am arrested for what happened last night, if I am tried and sent to penal servitude, I shall prove in my own person that the punishment unjustly imposed upon women, who have no voice in making the laws, cannot be carried out." (At Cardiff, February 19.)

Mr. Bodkin concluded by observing that the jury and those conducting the prosecution must play their part in putting an end to a condition of things which was "perfectly and absolutely intolerable."

It is unnecessary to give any details of the evidence given as to the damage done to the house in question, for these things were never disputed. Mrs. Pankhurst made a long and eloquent speech in her own defence, and after protesting against



her trial by a jury of men, and against certain remarks of a personal nature which Mr. Bodkin had made in the course of the proceedings, and against the employment of uneducated persons to make reports of speeches, (though she admitted that in her case it was immaterial), she endeavoured to make it clear how it was that she, and many other respectable, naturally law-abiding, upright people, had come to hold the law in contempt, and to make up their minds seriously that they were justified in breaking it. "The whole of good government rests upon acceptance of the law, upon respect of the law," she said; "and I say to you seriously, my lord, and gentlemen of the jury, that women of intelligence, women of training, women of upright life, have for many years ceased to respect the laws of this country." She went on to cite instances of the law as it affected women, pointing out that, whereas she believed she could be sentenced to fourteen years' penal servitude for damage to property, the maximum punishment which the law permitted to be imposed for certain injuries to the physical and moral well-being of little girls was two years' imprisonment. She also referred to the disadvantage at which a married woman stood with regard to her own children, and to the inequalities of the divorce laws. She went on to pass severe criticisms on the administration of the law, and brought down on herself a severe rebuke from the Judge by referring to the case of a Judge of Assizes who was found dead in a house of ill-fame. She compared her own previous sentence of six weeks' imprisonment for breaking a pane of glass, valued at 3s., with the same sentence (in the First Division) passed on a gentleman in a certain city she knew well, for having corrupted several little girls. It was things such as these, she explained, that had driven women to take the law into their own hands, and to seek, by violent means if need be, the power to get them altered. "We are women," she said, "who rightly or wrongly are convinced that this is the only way in which we can win power to alter what

for us are intolerable conditions—absolutely intolerable conditions. . . . I break the law for no selfish motive. I have no personal end to serve, neither have any of the other women who have gone through this Court during the past few weeks. . . . Not one of them would, if women were free, be law-breakers. They are women who seriously believe that this hard path that they are treading is the only path to their enfranchisement. They seriously believe that the welfare of humanity demands this sacrifice. . . . There is only one way to put a stop to this agitation; there is only one way to break down this agitation. It is not by deporting us, it is not by locking us up in gaol; it is by doing us justice.” She concluded by appealing to the jury to find her not guilty of malicious incitement to a breach of the law.

The Judge in his summing up remarked that it was scarcely necessary for him to tell the jury that the topics urged by the defendant in her address to them, with regard to provocation by the laws of the country, and the injustice done to women by their voteless condition, could have no bearing on the question they had to decide. The motive could afford no defence to the indictment; all that they had to deal with was the evidence in the case.

The jury found Mrs. Pankhurst guilty, and added a strong recommendation to mercy; and Mr. Bodkin having recapitulated her previous convictions, she once more addressed the Court.

After remarking that she did not see how the jury could have come to any other decision, seeing that motive was not taken into account in human law, and in view of the Judge’s summing up, she announced her intention of terminating whatever sentence he might pass upon her at the earliest possible moment, as she felt under no moral obligation to conform to, or in any way accept, that sentence. “Is it not a strange thing, my lord,” she asked, “that laws that have sufficed to restrain men throughout the history of this country do not

suffice now to restrain women, decent women, honourable women?" She added that she was not going to fail those who in response to her incitement had broken laws, and faced the terrible consequences, but would face those consequences as they had done, and would struggle against overwhelming odds as long as she had an ounce of strength or any life left in her.

Mr. Justice Lush then addressed the prisoner, saying that it was his painful duty to pass a suitable and adequate sentence for the wicked crime of which she had been most properly convicted, due regard being paid to the strong recommendation to mercy by the jury. If she would but undertake to amend matters by using her influence in a right direction, he would be the first, he said, to use his best endeavour to bring about a mitigation of the sentence, which would be one of three years' penal servitude.

### Scene in Court

As soon as the sentence was pronounced, a remarkable scene occurred in the Court. Mrs. Pankhurst's followers raised cries of "Shame!" "Bravo!" "Keep the flag flying!" and so on, and called for three cheers for the prisoner, which were responded to with enthusiasm, while the Judge and officials of the Court looked on in astonishment. During a pause in the demonstration, the former gave instructions for the Court to be cleared. The women marched through the lobbies singing the Women's Marseillaise, shouting and cheering, and some preceded Mrs. Pankhurst in taxis to the gates of Holloway, a picket being stationed there on this as on subsequent occasions, for the whole period of her incarceration. The vigil on this occasion was maintained for nine days and nights, for about 10.30 on the morning of Saturday, April 12, Mrs. Pankhurst was removed to a nursing home, in a state of great prostration, having on this occasion, for the first time, refused to drink as well as to eat, and having lost a stone in weight. She was



provided with a "Special Order of Licence, under the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853 to 1891," a document which stated, among other things, that she was entitled to be at liberty for fifteen days, unless convicted of some offence within the United Kingdom, or unless she broke any of the conditions endorsed on the licence. One of the conditions was that the holder of the licence should abstain from any violation of the law, so it cannot be denied that every possible effort was made to impress Mrs. Pankhurst with the necessity of obeying the law. As a matter of fact, her respect for the document was such, that (according to the statement of Mr. Hume Williams in the House on April 23) she immediately tore it up, and distributed the fragments among her faithful followers.

Some days later—*i.e.*, three days before this licence expired—the Cat and Mouse Act received the Royal Assent, and thereafter Mrs. Pankhurst was brought under its provisions. Two differences are to be observed between the "orders" or "notices" given to Suffragettes, and the ordinary convict's "ticket of leave." For one thing, the latter is given as the reward of *good* behaviour, whereas hunger-striking was always treated as gross "misconduct." And, for another, the sentence was expiring while the prisoner was out on "ticket of leave," permanent discharge being the usual result; whereas in the case of prisoners released under the Cat and Mouse Act (commonly called "mice") this was not the case.

Mrs. Pankhurst's licence was apparently neither the one thing nor the other, being described by Mr. McKenna in the House (April 21) as a "special licence." The Act subsequently passed was made retrospective in this case, with questionable legality.

### **Diary of Mrs. Pankhurst's Subsequent Movements**

How far it was an idle threat on Mrs. Pankhurst's part to say that she absolutely defied those in authority to make her serve any sentence may be gauged from the following diary



of her subsequent movements. It has been amplified from one given in *The Times* of March 18, 1914, this and similar lists having been compiled from facts recorded in the Press, the references being too numerous to permit of their being given in each instance.

It may be recalled that Mrs. Pankhurst had previously been sentenced on four occasions, the last time on a charge of conspiracy, when she had been ordered to undergo nine months' imprisonment, of which she served about a month. Thus, she served in all fourteen periods of imprisonment, from eleven of which she was released in a critical condition.

1913.

- April 3. Sentenced to three years' penal servitude.  
12. Released after nine days' hunger and thirst strike, on a fifteen days' licence. Removed to Woking after notifying the police, no objection being raised.
- May 26. Rearrested at Woking on way to weekly meeting of W.S.P.U.  
30. Released on seven days' licence, after second strike.
- June 14. Rearrested on way to Emily Davison's funeral (the Suffragette who threw herself before the King's horse at the Derby).  
16. Released on seven days' licence after third strike.
- July 14. Attends weekly meeting of W.S.P.U. at London Pavilion.  
18. Receives visit from members of the Scottish deputation.  
19. Scene in Westminster, when another woman is arrested by mistake for her.  
21. Rearrested at weekly meeting of W.S.P.U.  
24. Released on seven days' licence after fourth strike.  
28. Attends weekly meeting of W.S.P.U., and speaks from invalid chair.
- Aug. 5. Attends weekly meeting of W.S.P.U. No attempt at rearrest.  
11. Speaks at Medical Congress. No attempt at arrest.  
15. Leaves for the Continent.

Oct. 11. Sails from Havre for New York. Is held up at Ellis Island, but allowed later to proceed.

[Lecture tour in the States.]

- Dec. 4. Rearrested at Plymouth on her return.  
 7. Released from Exeter Gaol on seven days' licence after fifth strike.  
 9. Detectives witness her departure for Paris.  
 13. Rearrested on return, before expiration of licence.  
 17. Released on seven days' licence, after sixth strike.

1914.

- Feb. 10. Makes public speech at Campden Hill. Another woman arrested by mistake for her.  
 21. Makes public speech at Chelsea. Again evades capture.
- Mar. 9. Rearrested amid riotous scenes at Glasgow. Conveyed to Holloway.  
 14. Released after seventh strike.  
 21. Rearrested at head of deputation to the King.  
 26. Released after eighth strike.
- July 8. Rearrested on leaving Lincoln's Inn House.  
 11. Released on a four days' licence, after ninth strike.  
 16. Rearrested on leaving nursing home to attend meeting of W.S.P.U. at Holland Park.  
 18. Released after tenth strike.

Thus, on the outbreak of war at the beginning of August, 1914—that is, during a period of sixteen months—not quite six weeks of the three years' penal servitude, to which she had been sentenced, was served.

### **Arrest of Miss Annie Kenney**

So much for the leader of the militant movement. It remains to be seen how the Cat and Mouse Act operated as regards other members of the W.S.P.U. During the fifteen months succeeding the passing of the Act, practically every prominent member of the Union, and a large number of the rank and file, came under its operations, Miss Annie Kenney being the first to do so. For not only was fresh legislation

hurriedly placed on the Statute Book at this period, but recourse was had to other more or less obsolete Acts which might assist in coping with the situation. Thus, on April 8, Miss Annie Kenney was dramatically arrested at Lincoln's Inn House, and borne off to Bow Street, there to answer a charge brought against her under an Act of Edward III., which will be dealt with more fully later. She was admitted to bail on giving an undertaking that she would not meanwhile take part either directly or indirectly in the militant movement.

### **Last Albert Hall Meeting**

On April 10, another meeting took place at the Albert Hall, when Miss Kenney, whose fiery speeches were usually a feature of the proceedings, was present in the unusual capacity of a spectator, and when the greatest enthusiasm was manifested for the absent leader, who had then been in prison for a week on hunger and thirst strike. Mrs. Drummond presided, and, after reading a passage inciting to resistance by force, remarked that she must not be held responsible, as she had merely substituted "women" for "men" in a speech of Mr. Bonar Law's relating to Ulster. Mr. Lansbury made an impassioned appeal to the men in the audience to come to the aid of the women in their fight. "I ask all of us here," he said, "to stand shoulder to shoulder with the women. Let them burn and destroy property and do anything they will. . . . They are carrying on the fight because they believe in something which is much bigger than a vote. They believe in human freedom. . . . This thing will always stand to their credit . . . that through good report and ill they never looked back." Addressing himself more especially to the women in the audience, he said: "You have got a movement that is bound to win through. You have a right to rebel."

A resolution calling for a Government measure, and declaring the determination of those present never to sub-

mit, but to continue the fight until victory was achieved, was carried unanimously, and the collection amounted to £15,000.

This was the twenty-second mass meeting held in connection with the movement at the Albert Hall. Five of these had been convened by the National Union, one by the Women's Liberal Federation, one by the National League for opposing Woman Suffrage, and the remainder by the W.S.P.U. The last-named society was also responsible for two more mass meetings held elsewhere, as we shall see.

### **Arrest of Mr. Lansbury and Mrs. Drummond**

Within a week Mr. Lansbury was served with a writ to appear at Bow Street on a charge of being a disturber of the peace and an inciter of others to commit crimes, and to show cause why he should not be ordered to enter into recognizances and find sureties for his good behaviour, the proceedings being taken under the statute of Edward III. to which reference has already been made. The following morning a like summons was served on Mrs. Drummond. The proceedings at Bow Street were short and formal, and the defendants were admitted to bail on giving an undertaking similar to that which had been required of Miss Kenney. Time was required to go into the obscure legal points involved.

### **W.S.P.U. Meetings in Hyde Park and Elsewhere proscribed**

Other events succeeded one another with startling rapidity. On April 15 a letter was sent to the Acting Secretary of the W.S.P.U. by the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis, informing her that the Home Secretary had directed him to instruct the police to take steps to prevent meetings being held by the Union in Hyde Park, on Wimbledon Common, and other public places. In answer to various questions in the House, Mr. McKenna did not attempt to justify the legality of



this course, but stated that, as he was responsible for the maintenance of peace and good order, it had been taken in the public interest, and that he had no doubt the measures adopted would be effective (Official Reports, Col. 359, Vol. 52).

The bearing of this action, on the part of the Home Office, on the liberties of the public generally was hinted at by the *Morning Post* of April 16, which admitted in its leading article that the women were to a certain extent justified in their attitude by the policy of deception which had been pursued by the Government, but expressed approval of the Home Secretary's action, in that it would constitute a useful precedent where other more serious forms of political crime, such as strike meetings, were concerned.

It is a well-nigh impossible task to give an adequate account of the combined effect of this repressive measure and the determined attitude of those against whom it was directed. For many months the utmost confusion prevailed. That there had been grave disorder prior to the prohibition of the meetings is unquestionable, though opinions differed as to the reason for these disorders, some attributing them to the public anger excited by the actions of the militants, and to their alleged open advocacy of crime as a means of advancing their cause. In point of fact, the commission of crimes was not advocated by the speakers at open-air meetings, who sought rather to explain how it had come to pass that such methods were being employed, and to remind uninstructed electors that it was by similar methods that their liberties had been won. On the other hand, the police were blamed for non-interference in wanton acts of hooliganism. Their position was undoubtedly a difficult one, and became only more so when the W.S.P.U. meetings were proclaimed; for whereas they had instructions to prevent members of this society from holding meetings, those convened by other societies, such as the "law-abiding" National Union, the Women Teachers' Franchise Union, and various men's socie-

ties, were held with their permission and under their protection. The result was that, whereas some unauthorized meetings were quite orderly and successful, others held under police protection were broken up. One such was the meeting held by the Men's League for Woman's Suffrage on May 4, which progressed in an orderly manner until a determined rush made by a rough element in the great crowd of some 7,000 persons brought it to an abrupt conclusion. The same day an enormous mass meeting was held in Trafalgar Square under the auspices of the Free Speech Defence Committee, to protest against the action of the authorities in forbidding the meetings in Hyde Park, as also in suppressing publications without definite charge, and in using "antiquated and misinterpreted law to silence and punish public speakers, not convicted of any crime." (These two latter points referred to the attempted suppression of the *Suffragette*, and to the prosecutions under the ancient statute of Edward III., which are dealt with elsewhere.) The meeting terminated in a fierce conflict between the police and the crowd, when five men were arrested. (A full account of the proceedings appeared in the *Daily Citizen* of the following day.) The public was clearly beginning to realize the menace even to the enfranchised portion of the community in the situation which had arisen.

### Scenes at Wimbledon Common and Elsewhere

Wimbledon Common, which had been specifically mentioned in the prohibition order, was the scene of many a fight for the right of free speech. Before the order was promulgated, grave disorders had also taken place there, "determined opposition," according to the *Morning Post*, being offered to the speakers, whose platform on one occasion (March 2) was wrecked. Shortly afterwards, Mrs. Lamartine Yates, the honorary local organizer, was served with a written notice warning her of the steps the Conservators of the Common proposed taking. Nothing daunted either by past experience

or by the opposition of local magnates, nor later by the action of the Home Secretary, Mrs. Yates and her supporters decided that at all costs the meetings must be held, in order to uphold the right of free speech, and the right of the public to rely on the guardians of the peace to preserve order and afford protection against injury, while attending lawful meetings.

Weekly meetings were accordingly held throughout the summer, and the crowd was estimated to number anything up to 15,000 persons. The local police responded gallantly to the appeal to them to protect the public, and rallied round the speakers during the progress of the meetings, and escorted them to a place of safety if necessary afterwards. In short, as it was impossible to show that the conveners of the meetings were infringing any law or by-law, they, the lawless and the outlawed, succeeded in upholding the right of free speech, for they did not desist from their efforts until complete order was restored.

Similar scenes took place on Hampstead Heath, on Streat-ham Common, and other open spaces, and in at least one locality (Forest Hill and Dulwich) an open-air campaign was inaugurated at the very time of the Home Office proclamation, and continued through the summer months of 1913 and 1914, right up to the time of the outbreak of war.

### **Capture of the Monument**

Comic relief was afforded to the general tenseness of the situation in April (during which month, it must be borne in mind, the Cat and Mouse Bill was proceeding on its way to the Statute Book, and every possible coercive means of putting a stop to the agitation was being tried), for on the 18th of that month the Monument was "captured" by two enterprising members of the sisterhood. In the momentary absence of the custodians, the two succeeded in slamming and barring the door giving on to the gallery running round the Monument, and in holding the position sufficiently long to run up the

W.S.P.U. flag in place of the City flag, and to exhibit the device "Death or Victory" to the eyes of the rapidly assembling multitude beneath. London rocked with laughter over this exploit, but probably paid scant attention to the leaflets showered upon its head, which explained, in terms anything but humorous, the reasons women had for such unconventional methods of advertising their cause. No charge was brought against the culprits, who were politely escorted by the police to the nearest underground station.

### **Raid on Lincoln's Inn House—Arrest of Officials**

The next action on the part of the authorities was the descent of a large force of police on Lincoln's Inn House, on Wednesday, April 30, and the arrest of five employées, namely the General Secretary and Manager; the Financial Secretary; the Acting Editor of the *Suffragette*; and the Business Manager and Advertisement Editor, of the same organ.

Mrs. Drummond was also arrested as she entered the office. The police took the names and addresses of some fifty to sixty other women who were present at the time, and after searching their handbags, etc., allowed them to leave the building, of which they took possession themselves. Miss Annie Kenney was also arrested on returning from France the following day, and that same night, yet another individual, who had been connected with the movement in a purely honorary capacity, was also taken in charge.

### **Printers of the "Suffragette"**

At the time that the raid on Lincoln's Inn House was taking place, another party of detectives proceeded to the printers of the *Suffragette*, and seized all the copy that was being set up for that day's issue. The paper managed nevertheless to make its appearance the next day, (in a somewhat attenuated form, and containing matter which Mr. McKenna stated in



the House, on May 5, ought not to have been printed), and enjoyed a particularly brisk sale.

The printer, who had undertaken the work for the first time that week, was arrested a couple of days later, and charged at Bow Street, on May 2, with the eight persons already mentioned, with having conspired with Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter and other members of the W.S.P.U. for the malicious destruction of property. He was released during the course of the police court proceedings, on entering into his own recognizances in £1,000, and finding two sureties in £500 each for his good behaviour for twelve months, an undertaking, be it added, from which he was shortly afterwards released. The *Suffragette* thereupon betook itself to Manchester to be printed, and the manager of the National Labour Press in that city, was the next victim. He was arrested on May 9, the day on which the next issue of the *Suffragette* made its appearance, and after several hearings in the police court he was committed for trial at the Assizes, being, however, admitted to bail. The trial took place on July 7, when, a verdict of "Guilty" having been returned, Mr. Justice Bailhache passed a sentence of *six days' imprisonment*, which in practice amounted to immediate discharge. Thus ended this "ill-judged adventure," as the *Nation* described his prosecution.

It was Mr. Bodkin who at Bow Street had announced, among other things, that the *Suffragette* must be "put a stop to," and the *Manchester Guardian* in its leading article of May 5 had stated that it knew of no power by which a newspaper could be suppressed, and pointed out that it was one thing to confiscate copies of a paper containing libellous or indecent matter, or matter inciting to crime; and another to suppress the paper itself. In any case, this was never accomplished as regards the *Suffragette*, which continued to appear regularly up to the end of July, 1914, though the printing changed hands several times. The first printer again had something to do with it in January, in consequence of which he was

eventually sentenced to two months' imprisonment, on July 9. An intimidating letter was thereupon sent by the Home Office to the distributing agents, warning them as to what might occur to themselves. In cases where this was effective, members of the W.S.P.U. undertook the distribution of the paper themselves.

### **Second Reading of the Plural Voting Bill**

During the Second Reading debate of the Plural Voting Bill on April 30, there were many references to the question of Woman's Suffrage, the most notable contribution being made by Mr. Snowden, who complained that, out of the wreckage of the Reform Bill, one item only, and that not the most important, had been selected. He declared that he would vote against the Bill, and oppose it at every stage, one reason being that it did not redeem the pledges made with regard to Woman's Suffrage. He asserted, indeed, that the Bill was a deliberate attempt on the part of the Government to evade those pledges. Lord Lytton spoke to much the same effect when, on July 24, the Second Reading debate took place in the Upper Chamber. The Bill was rejected by that assembly both on this occasion and when reintroduced a year later (Official Reports, Col. 1243, Vol. 52).

### **Second Reading of Mr. Dickinson's Bill**

On May 5 Mr. Dickinson's Bill reached its Second Reading, having passed its First Reading without a division on April 3; and two days were occupied in a discussion which, though serious in tone, was of a highly academic character. The old debatable points were once more solemnly canvassed. It was contended that women were intellectually and physically men's inferiors, and incapable of a judicious exercise of the franchise, or of backing up their views, if need be, by force. Their favoured position under the law was dilated on, and the improbability that the vote would have any effect on wages was

duly urged. It was argued that women had ample opportunity for exercising their activities in local government, and that the inevitable result of admitting them to the Parliamentary franchise would be to open to them the doors of Parliament itself. (One Member, Mr. Hunt, professed great concern as to whether they would wear hats, and as to what the correct manner of addressing a woman Speaker would be.) It was stated by several Members that the majority of women did not want the vote, and also that the majority of men were opposed. All these statements being more or less a matter of opinion, and incapable of proof, the debate was about as useful as the turning of a screw in a hole already too large for it. On firmer ground was Mr. Grant, who concluded his speech with this appeal: "Men have the vote and the power at the present time. I say, for Heaven's sake, let us keep it."

Particularly academic were the contributions of Sir Edward Grey, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald, and Mr. Lynch. The last-named was the only Nationalist Member to take part in the proceedings, the reason being, according to Mr. Atherley Jones, that the Nationalists were apprehensive as to the effect that the measure might have on the fortunes of Home Rule, there being some good ground for believing that a dissolution of Parliament would follow the passage of the Second Reading. Mr. Lynch reviewed the opposition to women's rights from the time of Aristotle onwards, and recounted how his own prejudices had been overcome. His speech was copiously adorned with quotations from Byron and other poets, and he concluded with a tribute to the genius, determination, and devotion, of Christabel Pankhurst, whom he described as the Mahomet of the female cause.

Mr. Macdonald said a lot of kind things about women, but though he expressed the opinion that it was a good thing that no Government was united on the subject, and that individuals were thus free to vote as they thought fit, he did not indicate how the Bill under discussion was likely to become law. Sir



Edward Grey paid a tribute to the scrupulous fairness of the Premier's attitude, but, beyond urging Members not to lay themselves open to the charge of trifling with an important subject, he likewise did not come to grips with the question. Two of the most vigorous opponents of the Bill, Mr. Arnold Ward and Mr. F. E. Smith, were insistent on the fact that a non-party measure had no chance of success.

Of the thirty-eight speakers, only some half-dozen in all made no reference to the literally burning question of militancy, which met with the severe condemnation of friends and opponents alike. A great variety of opinions were, however, expressed. Some, like Mr. Leif Jones and Mr. Atherley Jones, contended that the militants were small in number, while others, like Mr. Walter Long, asserted that they were more numerous than Members were willing to allow. Many speakers ruefully admitted the strength of the militant movement, and, while several urged that there should be no surrender to such methods, there were many expressions of sympathy with the large number of law-abiding Suffragists, who disapproved altogether of militant tactics. It was also admitted that these tactics had given rise to immense trouble and anxiety, that they had made the Liberal Government look utterly ridiculous; while, among others, the following opinions may be cited:

Mr. Dickinson believed that it was the thought of the position of women, even in civilized countries, being still a disgrace to humanity, which inspired some to undergo imprisonment and suffering—"ay, and drives some to acts of desperation," he added. Mr. Lynch admitted that the outrages committed had made him waver, but that whereas he had formerly viewed women, "not as men, but as trees darkly," these actions had revealed women to him. He realized that they had passions similar to men's, that they possessed energy, determination, and many qualities which, if turned to proper use, men would be the first to respect. Mr. Leif Jones and Mr. Goulding, while asserting that mili-



tancy was stupid, pointed to similar manifestations in the past, where the extension of men's franchise was concerned, when the grievances had been inquired into and righted. Mr. Snowden it was who said: "It is the duty of Governments and of Parliaments to remove grievances before a sense of injustice drives people to revolt"; and Mr. Rendall said that if there were a defence for unconstitutional methods—not that he admitted there was one—it was in the case of a class which had not got constitutional rights. Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck quoted these words from Macaulay: "The logic of misgovernment lies in this one sophistical dilemma: If the people are turbulent, they are unfitted for liberty; if they are quiet, they do not want liberty"; and Sir Wilfrid Lawson these of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman's: "Good government at its best is no substitute for self-government."

We must now consider the Bill itself, and review the chances it had of becoming law.

In introducing it, Mr. Dickinson stated that it was the Private Member's Bill promised by the Premier when the Reform Bill was withdrawn. He gratefully acknowledged the assistance given him by the Solicitor-General as chairman of the Committee which had been formed to deal with the matter. They had had to steer a course between Mr. Henderson's and Mr. Lyttelton's ideas, and had introduced married women (whom his seconder, Lord Henry Cavendish-Bentinck later described as the "corner-stone of social order," and Mr. Walter Rea as the picked, if not the pick, of their sex). He contended that it was an adequate measure which was sufficient to settle the question for some time to come. He argued that some such legislation was the only effective remedy for the situation which existed, and prophesied that a time would come when such a course would have to be adopted, but with less dignity than was then possible.

Some doubt existed as to the number of women whom the Bill would enfranchise, and Mr. Clough stated that the Presi-

dent of the Local Government Board, and the Secretaries for Ireland and Scotland, to whom he had appealed for information as to the number of women who would fulfil the conditions of Clauses 1 and 2, had all pleaded absence of data. He calculated that the total could not exceed seven and a quarter millions, which figure had apparently been arrived at by a process compounded of guesswork and rule of three. (The Press put the number at six millions.)

The question as to which there was most difference of opinion was whether the matter had been before the electorate. While some, like Mr. Snowden, were of opinion that it had, and quoted the pronouncement of *The Times* of November 24, 1910 (see p. 164), others, including Mr. J. M. Henderson and the Earl of Kerry, were equally emphatic that it had not; while others again, like Viscount Wolmer and Mr. Atherley Jones, argued that there was as much a mandate for this as for any other piece of legislation. Mr. Rendall pointed out that all reforms came by the supporters outnumbering the opponents, those who were indifferent being invariably the largest section of the community.

The statement that the principle was supported by every organized body of women of any importance all over the kingdom was borne out by lists of such organizations given by three of the speakers, which together make an impressive list far too long to quote here; while, as pointed out by Sir Alfred Mond, there were no figures in support of the contrary contention, though doubtless, as he remarked, there were many persons entirely apathetic as regards civic duties.

Some Members signified their intention of voting for the Bill, and for a restricting amendment in Committee. A memorandum had, indeed, appeared in the Conservative Press of May 6, signed by fourteen Unionist Members, stating that to be the best course. Others, including Mr. Beck (who seconded the amendment that the Bill be read six months later), were of opinion that it could not be so restricted;

while one Labour Member was in favour of enlarging it in Committee.

It had been previously arranged that two members of the Cabinet, and only two, should take part in the debate, an arrangement which called forth a strong protest from the National Union. Early on the second day Mr. Asquith stood up with the twofold object of vindicating the attitude of the Government and of delivering a trenchant attack on the Bill. He devoted about a quarter of his speech to explaining how the course adopted by the Government, following on the events of January, which they certainly had not foreseen, and which they could not control, had not been "inconsistent with the best traditions of British statesmanship." He passed on to give his personal reasons for not thinking that the extension of the franchise to women would be in the interests of the women or of the community. He stated, among other things, that democracy aimed at the obliteration of arbitrary distinctions, it had no quarrel with those which Nature had created and experience had sanctioned, and much more to the same effect.

Sir Edward Grey opposed him in a speech to which reference has already been made.

Throughout the two days the attendance of Members was very meagre, and on one occasion the House was very nearly counted out. *The Times* of May 6 put the number as low as ten to fourteen at one period of the first evening. In spite of the absence of the official Whips, 485 Members mustered, however, in the division lobbies, and there voted: Ayes, 219; Noes, 266, and the Bill was lost by a majority of 47 votes (Official Reports, Col. 1,704, Vol. 52).

Among those who voted against it was one who in 1908 had used these words: "Trust me, ladies. I am your friend, and I will be your friend in the Cabinet" (Mr. Churchill at N.W. Manchester.)

Thus concluded the last full debate in the House of Commons during the period under review, concerning a question which



had been before the House for well-nigh half a century, and which, in spite of this adverse vote, was admittedly the one of all others calling for a settlement.

The matter was just alluded to during the debate on the Government of Scotland Bill, later in the same month, when two Members, Mr. Munro-Ferguson and Mr. John, expressed regret at the exclusion of women, the former giving it as one reason for not backing the Bill. There were also several other references which will be alluded to in due course.

### Mr. Lansbury's Trial

We must now pursue the history of those who were in the clutches of the law, which had recently been strengthened by the Cat and Mouse Act, the satisfactory effects of which had been prophesied with so much confidence by Mr. McKenna.

Mr. Lansbury, with Mrs. Drummond and Miss Kenney, duly appeared at Bow Street in answer to the summonses issued against them under 34 Edward III. On April 26 the time of the Court was chiefly occupied in arguing about the history of the Act, the passing of which followed closely upon the conclusion of the Treaty of Brétigny, it being in part an emergency law, intended to deal with discharged soldiers returned from the wars, who were indisposed to settle down as peaceful citizens. One of the clauses runs as follows:

“ And also to inform themselves and to inquire touching all those who have been plunderers and robbers beyond the sea and are now returned and go wandering, and will not work as they were used to do before this time; and to take and arrest all those whom they are able to find by indictment or by suspicion, and to put them in prison, and to take of all those *who are of good fame*, where they shall be found, sufficient security and mainprise for their good bearing toward the King and his people, *and the others duly to punish*, to the end that the people be not by such rioters troubled or damaged, nor the peace broken, nor merchants or others



passing on the high roads of the realm disturbed or put in fear of the peril which may arise from such evil doers."

In a translation of this statute by a scribe of the fifteenth century, the word "not" is inserted before the words "of good fame"; and this manuscript being, seemingly, the source from which the early printed copies of the statute were taken, it has thus come about that the undoubted power possessed by J.P.'s to bind over persons "not of good fame" was conferred on them, not by the wisdom of the High Court of Parliament, assembled in the thirty-fourth year of Edward III., but by an unknown Exchequer clerk, who made a blunder in his transcript some time in the fifteenth century. As to how he interpreted "the others" in the succeeding sentence, history is silent ("The Powers of Justices of the Peace," an article by Messrs. Crump and Johnson, of the Record Office, *English Historical Review*, April, 1912).

These facts were brought to the notice of Mr. Bodkin, who in reply said that he did not consider it necessary to pursue antiquarian researches into the origin of a practice that had been in existence for centuries, and questions asked in the House by Mr. Wedgwood elicited from McKenna the reply that the matter was not likely to give rise to difficulties. He said that he was not familiar himself with the facts of the case, and that he could not, without notice, answer any questions on Mr. Wedgwood's early French.

### **Mr. Lansbury's Sentence and Appeal**

When the three defendants appeared again at Bow Street on May 3, Mrs. Drummond and Miss Kenney being then required to face another charge, the case against them was withdrawn, and Mr. Lansbury was the only "plunderer and robber" left to stand his trial as such.

Mr. Bodkin prosecuted, and read extracts from Mr. Lansbury's speeches in support of the contention that the latter had incited to violence. It was also alleged that he was a

frequent visitor at Lincoln's Inn House. The magistrate, Mr. Dickinson, brushed aside the points which had been raised with regard to the ancient statute, and remarked that, whether it did or did not apply, he had full jurisdiction under the Common Law, and by virtue of his commission of the peace, to take steps to prevent a future crime from being committed. He therefore ordered the defendant to enter into recognizances in £1,000, and to find two sureties in £500 each, for his good behaviour. Mr. Lansbury declined to do so, giving as his reason that, while the Government were prosecuting him, they took no steps against Sir Edward Carson, the Duke of Abercorn, and others, who had been illegally piling up arms in Ulster. After expressing the hope that he would reconsider his decision, Mr. Dickinson ordered the defendant to be imprisoned for three months in default of finding sureties, but consented to state a case for the High Court, pending the hearing of which Mr. Lansbury was released on bail.

This appeal was duly heard in the King's Bench Divisional Court on July 28, when Mr. Justice Bray, Mr. Justice Avory, and Mr. Justice Lush, upheld the magistrate's decision. The first-named, who delivered judgment, admitted that the wording of the statute was obscure, but gave it as his opinion, that it was much too late to go behind the decisions and statements of the law, which had been laid down for so long. The appeal was accordingly dismissed with costs.

Two days later Mr. Lansbury again appeared at Bow Street, whence, as he once more refused to find the sureties demanded, he was removed to Pentonville Prison, where he adopted the hunger strike.

On August 2 he was released under the Cat and Mouse Act on a nine days' licence. On August 10, the day before the licence expired, a mass meeting was held in Trafalgar Square to protest against his imprisonment. The speakers on this occasion included Mr. Wedgwood (who had been particularly active in asking questions in the House on the subject), Mr.

Scurr, Mr. Harben, Mrs. Despard, and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst. The last-named, herself a "mouse," at the conclusion of her speech, called upon the crowd to follow her to Downing Street, and scenes of great disorder and disturbance, almost amounting to a riot, took place. Seventeen persons, of whom ten were men, were arrested, and appeared the following day at Bow Street. Some cases were dismissed, and the significant point is that, of the sentences imposed, only two were served, one of these being one of fourteen days. The other prisoners, of whom one was already a "mouse," were released on licence.

### Mr. Lansbury's Petition

The day after that on which Mr. Lansbury's licence expired (August 12), Mr. Wedgwood presented a petition from him to the House, "humbly praying" for immediate relief from the urgent and continuing grievance from which he was suffering, in that his liberty was at the disposal of the police. He recounted the circumstances recorded above, specially drawing attention to the fact that the Judges of the High Court were of opinion that no statutory authority to bind over could be found, but that the magistrates had assumed the power for so long that the Court was unwilling to deprive them of such power.

In the discussion which followed, others besides Mr. Wedgwood took up the cudgels on Mr. Lansbury's behalf. Asked whether he considered Mr. Lansbury's language any stronger than Sir Edward Carson's or Mr. F. E. Smith's, Mr. McKenna said he must have notice of such a question. Regarding the question of the much-discussed statute of Edward III. he said that, as he understood the case, Mr. Lansbury was bound over, not under that statute, but under the general powers of the magistrate under Common Law to prevent a breach of the peace. On yet another occasion, when pressed on the point, he said that he was certainly not aware that the power of binding to the peace was Judge-made, and not



statutory (Official Reports, Cols. 2224, and 2342 *et seq.*, Vol. 56.)

There the matter rested, and it remains to be added that the Cat and Mouse Act was not again brought into force with regard to Mr. Lansbury. When asked the following February why this was so, while Mrs. Pankhurst was arrested again and again, Mr. McKenna stated that, while Mrs. Pankhurst took every opportunity of openly defying the law, Mr. Lansbury had expressed no such intention. With that the Government had perforce to be content, for neither undertaking nor sureties were ever given.

### **Preliminary Hearing of the Third Conspiracy Charge at Bow Street**

Mrs. Drummond, Miss Kenney, and the other six persons arrested on a charge of conspiracy, made in all six appearances at Bow Street before Mr. Curtis Bennett during the month of May, and there was the same fight about bail as in the case of Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence and Mrs. Pankhurst the year before.

At the end of the first hearing one of them was admitted to bail, and this privilege was extended to two others at the conclusion of the second day's hearing. The other five then entered on the hunger strike, with the result that on the third day they were in a state of collapse, Mrs. Drummond being so ill that the proceedings had to be adjourned. All but one were then admitted to bail. At the fourth hearing a medical man appeared to say that Mrs. Drummond would be too ill to appear for two months at least, and so she dropped out of the case for the time being. (It was not until the end of October that she surrendered to her bail, having meanwhile undergone a severe operation. Mr. Bodkin took the opportunity of expressing the hope that what had happened to the other defendants would be a warning to her not to be involved in such proceedings in the future, and the case against her was withdrawn.)



The remaining seven defendants were on May 15 committed for trial, and were all admitted to bail on giving the usual "undertaking."

### Third Conspiracy Trial at the Old Bailey

The trial took place at the Old Bailey before Mr. Justice Phillimore, and occupied six days between June 9 and June 17. There was a formidable array of counsel on both sides, the case for the prosecution being chiefly in the hands of the Solicitor-General, Sir John Simon. Miss Kenney conducted her own defence, and Mr. McCurdy appeared on behalf of three of the defendants, the others being also represented by counsel. According to the *Daily News*, it had required a pantechmicon to remove from Lincoln's Inn House the documents on which the charge was founded, so it is not surprising that the proceedings were somewhat protracted. There were five counts in the indictment, one of which was a charge of conspiracy for attacks on letter-boxes, and another for giving false fire-alarms. It would be wearisome to recount the proceedings in any detail. Suffice it to say that the connection between the defendants and the W.S.P.U., whose doings were disturbing the public peace at the time, was established, but that no unlawful act could be attributed to three of these defendants, whose connection with the movement was entirely confined to office routine. The Acting Editor of the *Suffragette* had indeed, in the course of a speech, made remarks alleged to be of an "inciting" character, while the fact that the financial secretary had been twice sentenced for participation in the movement was duly taken into account in her case. Miss Kenney, whose part in the movement was well known, defended herself in a speech which the Solicitor-General characterized as "powerful and inspired by very deep feeling." She put it to the jury that the women taking part in the movement must be inspired by a great ideal, and must believe very intensely in what they are fighting for, to

be willing to face, not only imprisonment, but the horrors of the hunger strike and of forcible feeding as well. She declared herself to be a rebel, and said she would continue to be one until women were enfranchised, adding that she was prepared to sacrifice her life if need be.

All the defendants pleaded "Not guilty," and no witnesses were called on their behalf, nor did they offer any evidence themselves.

The Judge in his summing up said that it was one of the saddest trials in all his experience as a Judge, and proceeded to enlarge upon the folly and wickedness of militancy. The jury having returned a verdict of "Guilty" in the case of all the defendants, with a strong recommendation for leniency of sentence in the case of three of them, he addressed them once more, and, after enumerating the various reasons which in his opinion drew women into the movement, he stated that he recognized that they themselves had taken part in it from the sincere belief that they were forwarding a good object, but assured them that in time to come they would look back upon that time with astonishment that they could ever have thought of such outrages. Finally he pronounced sentence, varying from six to twenty-one months, all in the Third Division.

The defendants were each further ordered to pay one-seventh of the costs of the prosecution, and to be bound over in two sureties to keep the peace for twelve months, after they came out of prison, and failing such sureties they were to remain in prison.

Possibly the Judge had some recollection of the futility of similar sentences on previous occasions, for he said that he was bound to add that should the Home Secretary consult him, as he sometimes did consult a Judge, he would take upon himself the responsibility of saying that, at any rate as far as the ringleaders were concerned, they should not under any circumstances be let out of prison. They were all removed to different gaols.

### **Another Case in the Courts**

About the same time (June 7), another case connected with the agitation came before Mr. Justice Darling in the King's Bench Division. This was the case of Robinson and Cleaver and others against Mr. and Mrs. Pethick Lawrence, Mrs. and Miss Pankhurst, Mrs. Tuke, and the members of the W.S.P.U., in which the plaintiffs sought to recover damages for the window-breaking raid of the previous March. Speeches for the defence were made by Mr. G. Wallace, K.C., and by Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence, the last-named of whom made one more endeavour to make the Court understand what women felt like in being governed without their consent, and pointed out that the persons who had really "incited" were Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Hobhouse. This speech Mr. Justice Darling characterized as the most eloquent he had ever heard in that Court, and admitted that nobody could help sympathizing with a great deal Mrs. Lawrence had said. He himself did not wish to express any opinion, certainly no hostile opinion with regard to the question itself.

The jury returned a verdict for the plaintiffs for the amount claimed by them, with costs, and a few days later, 93 other plaintiffs were also awarded damages. The total sum, some £2,000 in all, was in point of fact extracted from one of the defendants, Mr. Pethick Lawrence, against whom bankruptcy proceedings had been taken by the Government, as he had steadily declined to pay the balance still due on the costs of the Conspiracy Trial of the preceding year. That amount (some £600), and the sum mentioned above, were thus claimed from his estate.

### **The Piccadilly Flat Case**

It is not irrelevant to compare with the sentences on Miss Kenney and her companions one pronounced about the same time on a woman charged with living on the immoral earnings of girls, for the case excited much interest at the time, and was the subject of considerable discussion in the House (Official

Reports, Vol. 56). Full details of this unpleasant case are given in a leaflet entitled "The Queenie Gerald Case," by Keir Hardie, published by the National Labour Press, in which it is made very clear that a more serious charge against this woman was dropped in order to prevent the names of certain prominent men who frequented her flat from being divulged.

She was sentenced by Mr. Lawrie, at the London Sessions, to three months' imprisonment on July 10, and three weeks later Mr. McKenna, being asked point-blank if she had been liberated (it being commonly reported that such was the case), replied: "So far as I know, the three months has not expired yet" (Official Reports, col. 730, Vol. 56.)

### Diary of Miss Kenney's Subsequent Movements

It will be interesting to see to what extent Judge Phillimore's threat was carried into execution. By June 24 all the conspiracy prisoners were discharged from prison under the Cat and Mouse Act. Miss Kenney's movements deserve to be recorded in full. They are as follows:

1913.

- June 17. Sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.
- 21. Released from Maidstone Gaol on a seven days' licence.
- July 2. Rearrested, and taken to Holloway.
- 5. Released, after second strike on a seven days' licence.
- 14. Speaks at weekly meeting of W.S.P.U., and sells her licence by auction. Is rearrested on leaving.
- 18. Released after third strike on a seven days' licence.
- 28. Rearrested on leaving the Pavilion after again speaking.
- Aug. 1. Released after fourth strike, on an eight days' licence.
- 5. Speaks at Kingsway Hall. No attempt at rearrest.
- 11. Speaks at Kingsway Hall. No attempt at rearrest.
- 19. Leaves for the Continent.
- Oct. 6. Rearrested at the Pavilion after what the *Daily News* described as "a wild fight" on the stage be-



tween the police and her supporters. Articles lost by the police in the fray were afterwards put up to auction.

- Oct. 13. Released on a five days' licence, after fifth strike.  
 Oct. } Attends four succeeding weekly meetings of the  
 Nov. } W.S.P.U., but is too ill to speak.  
 Dec. 7. Is carried on a stretcher to Earl's Court meeting, and speaks. No attempt at rearrest.

1914.

- April 15. Speaks in the Lowestoft Hippodrome, at a meeting organized at the time of the N.U.T. Conference. No rearrest.  
 May 22. Is rearrested at Lambeth Palace, where she had sought refuge.  
 28. Released after sixth strike, and, returning to Lambeth Palace, is refused admission. She is taken by the police first to the police-station, then to the Lambeth Infirmary, and finally to a nursing home. She has an interview next day with the Bishop of London.  
 July 16. Speaks at the Holland Park meeting. Not rearrested.

Thus, less than one month of the eighteen months' sentence was served.

### Movements of Other Conspirators

Now as to the other five:

- The Business Manager served four imprisonments of 4, 4, 38, and 2 days, being rearrested in July, August and December.  
 The Financial Secretary served three imprisonments of 6, 2, and 5 days, being rearrested in July and October.  
 The Acting Editor served three imprisonments of 5, 3, and 4 days, being rearrested twice in July.  
 The General Secretary served two imprisonments of 8 and 4 days, being rearrested in October.  
 The Advertisement Editor served two imprisonments of 4 and 3 days, being rearrested in June.

Thus, out of an aggregate sentence of forty-eight months, practically three months in all were served by these five. The rearrest of two of the officials in October was only effected after a free fight had taken place between their colleagues and

the police outside Lincoln's Inn House, when further arrests were also made.

This, then, was the first fruit of the notorious Cat and Mouse Act, as to the working of which Mr. McKenna in the House expressed perfect satisfaction on July 23. "It has effected its purpose," he said, adding sententiously that those who broke the law could not hope to liberate themselves from it.

Let us now see how it operated as regards other prisoners, more especially those guilty of the serious offence of arson.

### Operation of the Cat and Mouse Act.

At the time of the passing of the Act there were thirteen persons in prison:

	<i>Date when sen- tenced.</i>	<i>Offence.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Release.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
1	Jan. 9	Attack on letter-box	8 months	Aug. 20	Sentence served.
2	Feb. 7	Breaking windows	5 months	June 9	Sentence served.
3	Feb. 21	Breaking windows	6 months	July 18	Sentence served.
4	Feb. 21	Breaking windows	4 months	April 30	Discharged when sentence half served; no reason given.
*5	Mar. 5	Firing a pillar-box	9 months	April 28	Rearrested Aug. 1913, Jan., June 1914.
*6	Mar. 8	Setting fire to railway carriage.	9 months	April 28	Forcibly fed 114 times.
7	Mar. 20	Breaking windows	5 months	July 29	Served sentence.
8	Mar. 27	Breaking windows	1 month	End of April	Served sentence.
9	April 4	Attempted arson, Roehampton	4 months	July 18	Served sentence.
*10	April 12	Found at Mitcham in possession of inflammatory materials	6 weeks	End of April	Not rearrested.
*11			6 weeks		Rearrested, Jan. 1914.
*12	April 22	Damaging pictures at Manchester Art Gallery	5 months	May 21	Not rearrested.
*13			9 months	End of June	Not rearrested.

Thus six persons (\*) came under the Act, of whom only two were rearrested.

The following is a complete list of convictions for the crime of arson, after the passing of the Act, up to the end of the year:

	<i>Date when sen- tenced.</i>	<i>Offence.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Release.</i>	<i>Rearrests.</i>
14	May 19	{ Connected with outrage at Kelso, April 5 }	3 months	May 23	..
15			9 months	May 26	..
16			9 months	May 24	June, Aug., 1913, May,
17			9 months	End of Nov.	June, 1914. (Unconditional release.)
18	July 3	{ Connected with outrage at Hurst Park, June 9 }	3 years P.S.	July 8*	Jan. 1914.
19			3 years P.S.	July 17	..
20	July 22	Connected with outrage at Don- caster, June 3	12 months H.L.	July 27	Twice in Nov., 1913.
21	July 30	Connected with outrage at Liverpool.	9 months H.L.	Aug. 6†	Aug., Sept., Oct. 1913.
22	Oct. 3	Firing pillar-box, Bradford	3 months H.L.	Oct. 10	..
23	Oct. 14	Arson at Cam- bridge	18 months	Oct. 20	..
24	Oct. 15	{ Arson at Glas- gow }	6 months	Oct. 20	..
25			8 months	Oct. 20	Feb., 1914.
26	Nov. 15	Arson at Hamp- ton, Oct. 4	18 months H.L.	On out- break of war.	..

Thus in the case of eight outrages only were arrests made leading to convictions—thirteen in all—and in the case of six prisoners, there were no rearrests. No single sentence was served, and after October 15, to the end of the year, with

\* Four days later this "Mouse" was sentenced to twenty-one days' imprisonment for breaking windows at the Home Office, of which sentence she served five days.

† This one was also released once while on remand.

one exception, there were no convictions for arson, and only one rearrest. Two women arrested at Leeds on December 1, who gave their names as "A" and "B," were released while on remand.

It must not, however, be thought that this form of outrage had ceased, or even become rare. From all over the country came news of the campaign of destruction which had been announced. Pavilions, timber-yards, empty houses, schools and other public buildings, were fired, and in some cases completely destroyed; pillar-boxes were attacked, telephone and telegraph wires were damaged, golf-courses were mutilated, haystacks, boathouses, and railway coaches were burnt; while bombs, which in many cases failed to explode, were found in post-offices, churches, and other buildings. Evidently the greatest care was taken to avoid the sacrifice of life, the attack being exclusively confined to property.

The following list, taken almost haphazard from the pages of *The Times*, gives some idea of the extent of the campaign, and of the amount of damage done through arson alone. It must be borne in mind that it is by no means exhaustive, even as far as this one paper is concerned.

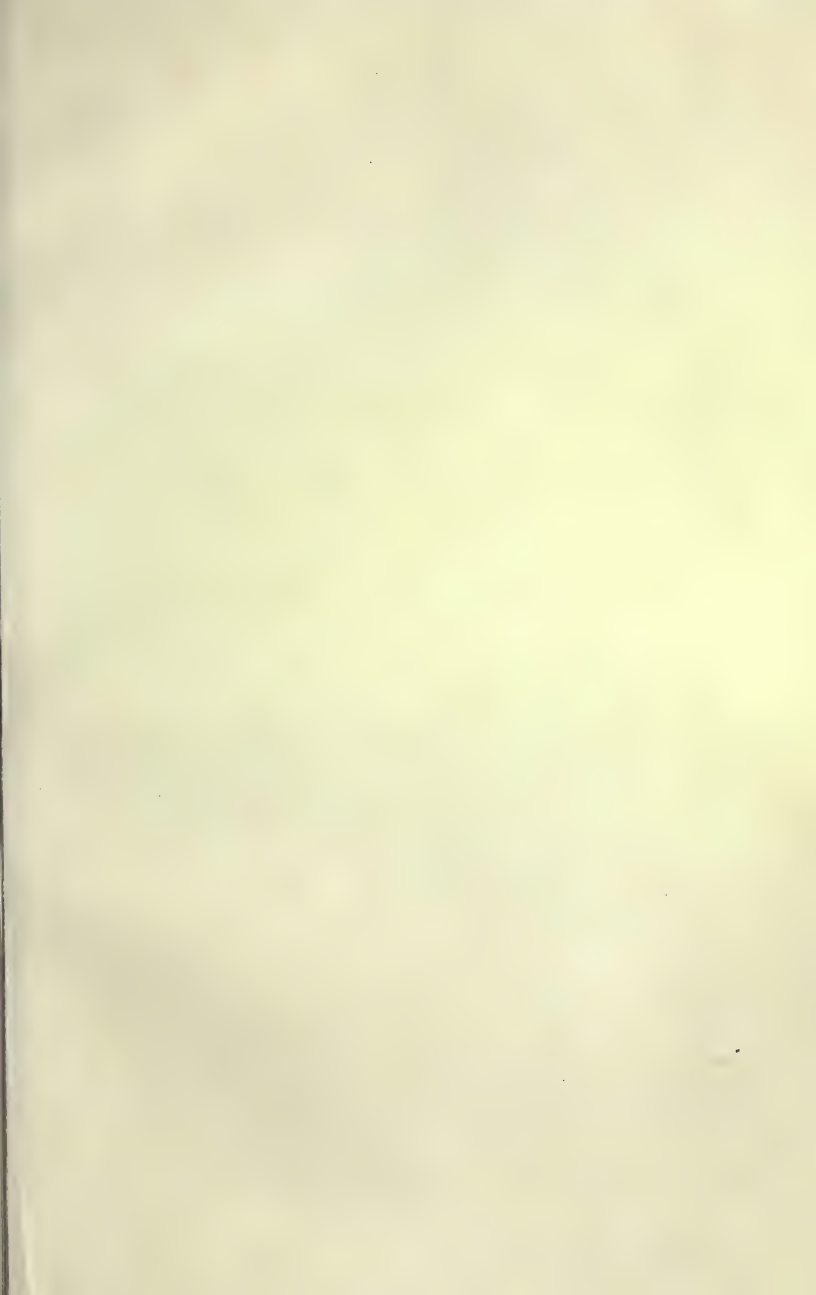
**Some Cases of Arson Reported in "The Times," 1913,  
after the Passage of the Cat and Mouse Act**

*April*: Explosion at Moot Hall, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

*May*: St. Catherine's Church, Hatcham, destroyed. Bomb found in St. Paul's Cathedral. Pavilion burnt at Fulham. House destroyed in Finchley Road. Houses destroyed near Bexhill. "Oak Lea," near Barrow-in-Furness, destroyed. Faringdon Hall, near Dundee, destroyed (damage, £20,000). Boathouse destroyed at Nottingham (damage, £2,000). Houses fired at Cambridge (damage, about £1,000).

*June*: Station fired near Glasgow. "Solihull," near Birmingham, destroyed. Fire at St. Andrews University. Station fired near Birmingham.







### ÆSCULAPIUS IN LONDON.

MR McKENNA (to Presiding Deity of International Medical Congress): "YOU LOOK AS IF YOU KNEW ALL ABOUT MICROBES, SIR. COULDN'T YOU FIND ME AN ANTIDOTE TO THIS?"

*[Reproduced by special permission of the proprietors of "Punch."]*

*July:* Pier fired at Southport. House fired at Selly Oak, Birmingham.

*August:* Hollerday House, Lynton, destroyed (damage, £10,000). Intermediate School at Cardiff fired. Pavilion destroyed at Willesden. Mansion fired at Finchley (damage, £500).

*September:* Fire at Dulwich College. Kenton Station fired. Penshurst Place fired (thereafter closed to the public). Seaforth House, Liverpool, destroyed (damage, £8,000).

*October:* Two stations fired near Birmingham. Yarmouth Pier fired.

*November:* Fire at Streatham Hill Station. Haystack burnt near Burton-on-Trent. Cactus House, Alexandra Park, Manchester, fired. Attempted outrage at Sefton Park, Liverpool. "Begbrook," Bristol, destroyed (damage, £3,000). Boathouse destroyed at Bristol (damage, £3,000). Fire at Newport Training College.

*December:* Kelly House, Wemyss Bay, destroyed (damage, £30,000). Attempt to fire Aintree Racecourse Stand. Fire at Liverpool Exhibition. Rusholme Exhibition Hall, Manchester, destroyed (damage, £12,000). Timber-yard destroyed at Devonport (damage, £10,000). House gutted at Bristol. Bomb explosions near Holloway Gaol. "Westwood," Bath, destroyed.

No arrests leading to convictions were made in connection with any of these outrages. A far more complete record is given later on for the first seven months of the next year.

While these and doubtless many other crimes went unpunished, arrests continued to be made for minor offences, such as window-breaking, and even "obstruction," and the authorities adopted the same punishment for all offenders—constitutional workers (like the officials arrested at the end of May), petty offenders, and (when they could be caught) the authors of serious crimes.

On March 18, 1914, in reply to a question in the House, Mr.

McKenna gave particulars of the forty-two prisoners released under the provisions of the Cat and Mouse Act up to that date. This list began with one who had been guilty of seven separate offences, and had been rearrested five times, each time on a fresh charge (presumably Miss Richardson, of whom there will be more to say by-and-by), and concluded with one who had committed one offence, and been rearrested six times in connection therewith. (This offence could not have been a serious one, as all such are accounted for elsewhere in this book, and in no instance was such an offender rearrested more than four times for the same offence.)

### Scene at the Derby

An incident connected with the campaign, which thrilled the whole civilized world, occurred on Derby Day (June 4). Just as the chief event of the day was taking place, a Suffragette, Emily Wilding Davison, who on many previous occasions had done conspicuous deeds, ran out in front of the King's horse, just as the field rounded Tattenham Corner, and she, the horse, and its rider, were involved in a terrible crash. *The Times* in its leading article of the following day said: "Whether she intended to commit suicide or was simply reckless, it is hard to surmise. . . . We may possibly learn from the offender herself what exactly she intended to do." The curiosity of the public in this respect was not, however, destined to be gratified, for after lingering a few days, without recovering consciousness, Miss Davison passed beyond human jurisdiction, and the jury returned a verdict of "Death by misadventure." Those who knew her, however, testified to the fact that for long she had held the view that some startling event was needed to bring the question prominently before the public, and preparations were made to do honour to the woman who had not held back from risking the supreme sacrifice.



### Funeral Procession

On Saturday, June 14, Miss Davison's body was borne across London, followed by a procession numbering some 6,000 persons, marching to the strains of solemn music, and bearing banners inscribed with such devices as—"Thoughts have gone forth whose power can sleep no more. Victory! victory!" "She died for women." "Fight on; God will give the victory." Among those who followed in the procession may be mentioned—A band of clergy (one of whom, Rev. C. Baumgarten, conducted a brief funeral service in St. George's, Bloomsbury); the "Conspiracy" prisoners, whose trial concluded the following Tuesday; a group of Miss Davison's fellow-graduates of the London University, in academic costume; and, in addition to the large number of members of the W.S.P.U., representatives of several other societies, including many hundreds of men. An empty carriage betokened what Mrs. Pankhurst's place would have been, but she was rearrested on her way to join the procession. The route lay through the West End to Bloomsbury, where the service took place, and thence to King's Cross, where the body was entrained for the North, being finally laid to rest in the family grave at Morpeth in Northumberland. Great crowds lined the route, and in parts almost prevented the progress of the procession; but the arrangements were carried out in a manner which the *Daily News* described as "as fine a piece of organization as any for which the W.S.P.U. had been responsible," and which, in view of the recent attack on the headquarters, and the imprisonment of many of the responsible officials, was certainly most remarkable. Among the various Press comments, the following from the *Birmingham Daily Post* may be quoted:

"Not even the most convinced opponent of Women's Suffrage who happened to see the funeral procession of Miss Davison pass through the London streets could fail to be im-

pressed with the deep earnestness of those participating, and the reverent bearing of the great crowds along the route. Some fear had existed on the latter head, because the manner of the death had been such as to arouse a bitter feeling among what is termed the "sporting element" of the population; but, except at one or two points, any manifestations of hostility were trivial, and even at these were promptly hushed down, for every onlooker felt in the presence of death self-incurred for the sake of a cause."

Hundreds of wreaths were sent by private individuals and societies, with inscriptions such as, "Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by?" "To Freedom's cause till death," or with personal expressions of sympathy or admiration; and numerous societies passed resolutions of appreciation and respect. An equally impressive procession accompanied the body to its final resting-place at Morpeth. A memorial ceremony is annually held in this quiet spot.

### **The Suffrage Pilgrimage**

The militant campaign undoubtedly somewhat obscured the real issue underlying the agitation; for the public generally knew but little of the real history of the movement, or of the provocation which Suffragists had received, while the Press sedulously informed it of their misdeeds. Propaganda work, though exceptionally difficult under the circumstances, went on uninterruptedly throughout the year; nor was it confined to those societies who proclaimed themselves "law-abiding," for the W.S.P.U. alone was responsible for some eighty or ninety meetings every week.

The long days of June and July were utilized by the members of the National Union to carry out a great Suffrage Pilgrimage, which converged on London from eight different routes, and culminated in a great meeting in Hyde Park on July 26. Nineteen platforms were erected from which the speakers addressed the crowd, and at 6 p.m. a resolution was

put simultaneously from these, in support of women's demand for political liberty, and was carried with but few dissentients. It may be mentioned that the meetings of this society had taken place throughout the summer in the Park on Sunday afternoons, in spite of the great difficulties experienced in connection with police "intervention" or "protection," whichever it might be called. During the pilgrimage 480 meetings were held and a sum of £8,000 was collected, and at some places rival meetings were organized by Anti-Suffragists.

Deputations from the National Union subsequently waited on the Premier, Mr. Bonar Law, and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald. Mr. Asquith said (August 8) that he had been greatly impressed by the pilgrimage, but he declined to answer a question as to what steps he and the Government proposed taking to further the object it supported. He stated that nobody had been more disappointed than himself at the Speaker's ruling, emphatically denied that any pressure had been brought to bear by the Government, and gave it as his opinion that, in the final resort, the people must decide the matter. Mr. Macdonald assured the deputation which waited on him that the Labour party was solid for Woman Suffrage; while the interview with Mr. Bonar Law was private, so what transpired is not available.

A deputation also waited on Mr. McKenna to put before him how inadequate had been the police protection in various places where meetings had been held by the pilgrims. At his request, a statement was submitted in writing, which he characterized as "fair and moderate," when a question was asked in the House on the subject (August 13). He undertook on this occasion to communicate with the various provincial police authorities, on whom he said he had no power to enforce his wishes, but who, he was happy to say, "attended to wise advice."



### Petitions to be Heard at the Bar of the House

This seems to be a suitable time to refer to special efforts which were made by various bodies to secure a fair consideration of the question. In the course of the year three memorials were presented to Parliament.

1. At the end of the year 1912, the Actresses' Franchise League had sent a memorial to the Speaker, praying to be allowed to come and plead their cause at the Bar of the House. But, beyond a formal acknowledgment, no notice was taken of this request. On January 8, 1913, the request was repeated, references being made to the privilege having been accorded to the Lord Mayor of Dublin, and to the even greater right which women claimed to explain their position themselves, seeing that every other channel had been closed to them. The reply was that the necessary permission rested with Members of Parliament. The League thereupon approached other societies, with the result that an enormous petition was got together, which was presented in two parts.

2. One of these was presented by Lord Robert Cecil on April 22, from representatives of thirty Suffrage societies, with a membership of over 100,000. It was signed by many eminent women, among whom may be mentioned Mrs. Fawcett, Mrs. Despard, Lady Selborne, and Mrs. Flora Annie Steele, and it set forth clearly eight reasons for women's claim to be heard at the Bar of the House. The petition was read, and, according to custom, the House passed on to the consideration of other business without comment.

3. The other petition was presented by Mr. Keir Hardie two days later (April 24). It was from various women's organizations, with a total membership of 24,000. The same request was made, and the reasons for making it were set forth from the point of view more especially of the working woman.

When a few days later Lord Robert Cecil, supported by Mr. King, again brought the matter up, and asked the Premier



whether he would give time for its discussion, Mr. Asquith advanced the usual plea of lack of time (Official Reports, Col. 821, Vol. 52).

It will be remembered that the House had just completed its labours on the Cat and Mouse Bill, so there was, perhaps, more justification than usual for this plea.

### **Protests Against the Cat and Mouse Act**

The protests of various kinds made against this piece of legislation are too numerous to record, but special mention must be made of four attempts made by influential bodies to secure an interview with the Premier on the subject.

### **Deputation from Scotland**

One of these attempts was made by a body composed of Scottish Bailies and Town Councillors, the nucleus of which body had gathered at the graveside of Emily Davison, and inspired by her sacrifice, and organized by the untiring efforts of Mrs. Arncliffe Sennett, had in the short intervening period developed into an influential society. The feeling of these men against the Act was such that they determined to demand an interview with Mr. Asquith on the subject. Three times was a request to this effect sent to the Prime Minister, and three times did it meet with a refusal. Last of all a telegram was sent him, informing him that the deputation would present itself as arranged. Accordingly, the deputation, numbering nearly forty men, representing Edinburgh, Glasgow, and other places, arrived in London on July 18. On presenting themselves at Downing Street, ten of them were admitted to the Prime Minister's residence, where they were received by his private secretary, and by Mr. J. W. Gulland, the Scottish Whip, who informed them that Mr. Asquith was not at home, and invited them to leave their views in writing. This they indignantly refused to do, and one of their number, Bailie Alston, made an impromptu speech on the doorstep of 10,

Downing Street, in which he stated that it was not a question of hundreds, but of thousands, of Liberals who were calling for the repeal of the Act. He was not, however, arrested, as women had been for similar "offences."

On the following Monday, members of the deputation succeeded in obtaining an interview with the Secretary for Scotland (Mr. McKinnon Wood), to whom they spoke very plainly, but who made a non-committal reply. That same day the members of the deputation formally enrolled themselves as members of the Northern Men's Federation for Women's Suffrage, a non-party and constitutional organization, which has since prominently advocated the policy of antagonism to any Government whose leader declines to deal with the question.

The deputation was entertained on the night of its arrival by the Actresses' Franchise League, and the Men's League for Woman Suffrage, when a resolution calling upon the Prime Minister to resign was carried unanimously. A private visit was also paid to Mrs. Pankhurst.

### **The Clergymen's Deputation**

A movement also arose among the clergy about the middle of July, which had the support of about 160 clergymen, including the Bishop of Lincoln and the Bishop of Kensington, who sent a weighty memorial to the Prime Minister, demanding the immediate repeal of the Act. Later a request was sent for an interview with delegates appointed by this body. In spite of the usual refusal, these presented themselves at Downing Street on August 7, and ten of them were allowed to pass through the cordon of police which had been drawn up across the entrance. Three were admitted to the residence of the Prime Minister, where they, too, were received by his private secretary, to whom a strongly worded protest was handed. "In the name of God," it concluded, "we protest against this cruel and unprecedented procedure of the law.

As citizens, we regard this Act as the most illiberal and unjust of our generation; as Christians, we deplore the substitution of coercion for the doing of justice." Yet the repeal of the Act was never moved by any of the Bishops, who in common with other members of the Upper House had facilitated its passage to the Statute Book.

### **The Hampshire Deputation**

A deputation from the men of Hampshire, organized by Dr. E. H. Stancombe a few days later, with the same object as the preceding, met with a like treatment. Fourteen men, including representatives of the Labour party, who said they had a mandate from 30,000 trade-unionists, accordingly presented themselves at Downing Street, where once more a strong cordon of police was drawn up, and three members of the deputation were allowed to proceed to the Premier's residence. On being informed that they, too, could only be received by his secretary, they left their protest in writing, together with a strongly worded remonstrance as to the undemocratic character of their reception; and, on returning to Whitehall, Dr. Stancombe made an impromptu speech to the assembled crowd, but was not arrested. The deputation then repaired to the House of Commons, and stated their case to the Member for Hampshire.

### **Deputation to the House**

On July 8 a crowded and enthusiastic meeting was convened by the National Political League at the Queen's Hall, to protest against the Act, and to call upon the Government to fulfil its pledges and thus put an end to the deplorable situation. Among the speakers were Mr. Lyon Blease, Mr. Aylmer Maude, and several well-known clergymen.

Later in the month a conference of representatives of various political and social bodies and of medical men was held at the Caxton Hall, the result of which was that Sir Edward Busk



(formerly Vice-Chancellor of the University of London) led a deputation of well-known men and women to the House on July 24, to demand the repeal of the Act. Mrs. Cecil Chapman, wife of the police court magistrate, and other ladies, were treated with great roughness by the police, and driven unceremoniously away from the entrance; while three of them, who attempted to address Members who were passing to and fro, were arrested and sentenced the following day to fourteen days' imprisonment, in default of being bound over for twelve months. By the instructions of the Home Secretary, the magistrate reduced the sentence to four days, the ostensible reason being that the ladies in question, Lady Sybil Smith, Mrs. Pethick Lawrence and Miss Evelyn Sharp, had abandoned militant action for some considerable period, and were not "habitually engaged in the use of criminal methods" (Official Reports, Col. 2397, Vol. 56). It will be remembered that the Home Secretary had repeatedly asserted that the magistrate who tried these cases had complete power to use his own discretion in dealing with them.

### **Mrs. Pankhurst's Return from America**

Throughout the summer and autumn the agitation continued. Meetings were held and protests were made, "mice" were hauled back to prison with greater or less frequency, and damage continued to be done, out of all proportion to the number of arrests effected. Those in authority had perforce to ignore this aspect of the situation, but one thing which they could not ignore was the return of Mrs. Pankhurst from America early in December, an event which had been extensively advertised.

The *Majestic*, on which she travelled, arrived outside Plymouth about midday on December 4. Great preparations had been made for some time past among her supporters to give her a rousing reception; but any demonstration of the kind was forestalled by the action of the police, who put off in a small tender, escorted by two battleships, boarded the



*Majestic* outside the harbour, and conveyed Mrs. Pankhurst to a private landing-stage, and thence by motor-car to Exeter Gaol. Here she was treated with greater consideration than usual, and was released on the following Sunday, the news of her release being announced to a mass meeting held that night in the Empress Theatre, Earl's Court.

This meeting, which was to have been one of welcome, became one of protest and defiance; and while denouncing the cruelty and cowardice of the Government in arresting Mrs. Pankhurst, while leaving at liberty men law-breakers whose declared policy was that of bloodshed and slaughter, it proclaimed that torture and every form of coercion would fail, and that the women's revolution would only cease when women had the vote on the same terms as men. Mrs. Drummond presided, and Miss Annie Kenney addressed the meeting from a stretcher, being accompanied to and from the meeting by a "bodyguard" of women. The collection amounted to £15,000, of which £4,500 was realized by Mrs. Pankhurst's recent lecture tour in America.

### Protests of all Kinds

Throughout the year protests continued to be made by Suffragettes on every possible occasion. The leaders of the Labour party (including such old and tried friends as Mr. Snowden and Mr. Keir Hardie) were singled out for special attack, after the Speaker's ruling had made it clear that that party was either unable or unwilling to make an effective stand on the question. The annual conference of the party took place immediately after that event, and representatives of the working women's deputation having been refused leave to speak on that occasion, they adopted less conventional methods of making their grievances known. At the I.L.P. Conference at Manchester in March many protests were made, and on one occasion Mr. Keir Hardie was howled down.

Ministers and others found it increasingly difficult to make

their appearance in public, and in some cases cancelled their engagements.

On the other hand, it became more and more difficult for women to gain admission to such meetings, and men sympathizers took up this form of protest on their behalf. Members of the Men's Political Union, for instance, gained admittance to the Marconi inquiry, and succeeded in putting questions to Mr. Lloyd George which could hardly be considered relevant to the matter in hand.

On several occasions scenes took place in the House, one being made by Mr. Harben, who the previous year had withdrawn from the candidature of the Barnstaple division of Devonshire, as a protest against the "unmanly, ungentlemanly, unsportsmanlike, and uncivilized" way in which the Government were "bullying voteless women," to quote from the letter he wrote to the chairman of the Local Liberal Association on July 1, 1913, to announce his decision.

On another occasion (June 11) a bag of flour was thrown at the Premier; on another (July 11) a shower of mouse-traps came from the Strangers' Gallery; and on this and yet another date (July 23) the firing of a toy pistol was responsible for something not far removed from panic. The situation, in short, was undignified in the extreme.

Mr. Asquith was even molested when playing golf at Lossiemouth in August, and his car was held up near Bannockburn in November when he was himself attacked with a horsewhip. On both occasions arrests were made, but the matter was allowed to drop. His visit to Birmingham in July coincided with an outbreak of attacks on pillar-boxes and windows and with an epidemic of false fire-alarms in that city. Similar events occurred in Leeds, which he visited late in November, and an attempt was made to fire a stand at Headingley Football Ground. In December, a disastrous fire occurred in Manchester, which he also visited, a message being left to the effect that that was his welcome.

### **Attempts to Petition the King**

On several occasions attempts were made to petition the King in person, and on each of these arrests were made. The first attempt was made on March 10, when the King went in state to open the new Session of Parliament. This time sentences of three to four weeks' imprisonment were imposed and served. Other attempts were made at Liverpool, Bristol, and Goodwood, in July, and at the royal wedding in October; and on the two former occasions the prisoners were released by the King's request, and on the latter on declining to be bound over. At Bristol the petitioner was struck by one of the King's equerries with his sword.

### **Protests in Churches, Restaurants, and Theatres**

A new departure in the matter of public protests was inaugurated on August 10, when a number of women prayed aloud for Mrs. Pankhurst at Westminster Abbey. From that day forward, services in places of worship throughout the country were liable to be interrupted in this manner, in some cases only when a request to the incumbent to offer prayer on behalf of those suffering for conscience' sake had been made and refused. Sometimes the interrupters were ejected with more or less brutality, or were even arrested and sentenced, but more often the members of the congregation gazed in bewilderment and astonishment at those responsible for the incident. Protests were also made in October at the Church Congress at Southampton.

From the middle of September onwards, protests were frequently made in restaurants and theatres against forcible feeding. Some strong compelling force must surely have been at work to give women the courage to get up in some such place, where members of the general public were assembled for purposes of pleasure, and to introduce this unwelcome topic.



### Tax Resistance

Throughout the year tax resisters continued to defy the revenue officials, with varying results. Among those who resisted paying their taxes for the first time may be mentioned the Duchess of Bedford, Miss Beatrice Harraden, Mrs. Flora Annie Steele, and Miss Sargant, the last-named of whom presided over a section of the British Association later in the year, being the first woman to fill such a position.

Mrs. Harvey successfully withstood another siege from May to November in connection with her inhabited house duty, and her goods, when eventually seized, failed to realize the sum required by some £8, for the uproar created in the auction-room by sympathizers was so great that the auctioneer abandoned his task. Mrs. Harvey also refused to take out a licence for her gardener (by name Asquith), or to stamp his Insurance card. For these two offences she was sentenced to two months' imprisonment, in default of a fine, but was released at the end of one month, in a very weak condition of health, which was in no way attributable to her own "misconduct."

There were many other cases of resistance to the Insurance Act, it being an open secret that the Freedom League did not insure its employees.

Captain Gonne, who refused to pay his taxes as a protest against the treatment to which women were being subjected, was also arrested, but was released within a few hours, the reason being, so it was claimed, that in arresting him the revenue officials had been guilty of a serious technical blunder.

Several other resisters besides Mrs. Harvey barricaded their houses against the tax collector, and at Hastings the demonstration arranged in connection with the sale of Mrs. Darent Harrison's goods led to an organized riot, the result being that the local Suffrage Club brought an action against the Corporation for damage done, which they won. Undeterred by warnings that it would be impossible to hold a public meeting in Hastings in support of tax resistance, the League nevertheless determined to do so, and, as a matter of fact, everything



passed off in a quiet and orderly manner, Lady Brassey being in the chair. In subsequent years, this policy of open and constitutional rebellion on tax resistance lines has been maintained by Mrs. Darent Harrison.

Members of the Freedom League were particularly active in the matter of tax resistance and they also made many protests leading to arrest and imprisonment in support of free speech, or against unequal treatment of prisoners, and kindred matters. They also succeeded in drawing public attention to the manner in which prisoners were conveyed to prison. In answer to a question by Mr. Jowett on June 12, Mr. McKenna promised an inquiry into the matter, and incidentally revealed a curious condition of divided responsibility between the Commissioner of Police and the Prison Commissioners: for he stated that the vans were supplied by the former, and that police officers were the agents of the latter in conveying prisoners between the courts and the prisons (Official Reports, Col. 1771, Vol. 53).

### **East End Campaign**

After the working women's deputation of January, many members of which came from the East End of London, Miss Sylvia Pankhurst continued to carry on a campaign in that district. That militancy was to be part of the programme became evident when, after a meeting at the Obelisk on February 17, several arrests were made for window-breaking, and sentences of one to two months' hard labour were imposed without the option of a fine. Miss Pankhurst herself, and Miss Emerson, an American, were forcibly fed for upwards of five weeks before they were released.

On Sunday, May 25, a women's May-Day was celebrated in East London, and a great procession marched from the East India Docks to Victoria Park, where speeches were delivered from some fifteen platforms. There was some rowdiness, and one of the vans used as a platform was run out into the road. In reply to a question in the House as to the inadequacy of

the protection afforded by the police, Mr. McKenna stated (June 2) that the L.C.C. was responsible for policing the Park, the Metropolitan Police being responsible outside only—another instance of divided responsibility, which in this instance, at least, meant that neither party was responsible.

A few days later the East London Federation of the W.S.P.U. was formally set up under democratic government, and as, at the end of the year, the leaders of the W.S.P.U. expressed the wish that it should become a separate organization, it then assumed the name of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes, a title which later still (February, 1916) gave place to that of the Workers' Suffrage Federation.

In June the East London Federation organized a big procession to Trafalgar Square, and, in response to a speech from Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, a large part of the crowd set off for Whitehall, and hooted and shouted outside Mr. Asquith's residence. Shortly after, (July 3) Miss Pankhurst was also summoned under the statute of Edward III., but her arrest was only effected after an encounter between her supporters and the police at the Bromley Public Hall on July 7. The next morning she was sentenced to three months' imprisonment for declining to promise that she would not make further inciting speeches. The Cat and Mouse Act being now the law of the land, Miss Pankhurst came under its provisions, and she was rearrested four times before the end of the year, not, however, before many another free fight had taken place. As dock labourers and other East End men were among her supporters, the encounters with the police were of a very violent description, and there were several cases of broken bones. Miss Pankhurst was twice arrested after publicly appearing in Trafalgar Square, and trying to lead a crowd to Downing Street. After her third rearrest in October, she succeeded in speaking no less than eight times in public, before her capture was once more effected. On one occasion Miss Lansbury was arrested by mistake for her, and the police only discovered their mistake too late.

## 1914

**"Break-up of the Suffragettes"—Home Office Memorandum**

A stage of the conflict had now been reached when both parties, as we have seen, had made use of the word "intolerable"—Mrs. Pankhurst, speaking on behalf of militant women, in reference to the conditions under which they had to live; and Mr. Bodkin, speaking on behalf of law and order, in reference to the situation which these rebel women had brought about. Since these words had been spoken, there had been no abatement of the fight on the one side or the other. It was claimed by the Home Office that the steps it had been found necessary to take had acted as a deterrent to crime, and in a Memorandum officially communicated to the Press, which was printed by the *Daily Mail* of January 12, 1914, under the heading "Suffragettes broken up," the following facts are given:

Forty-eight persons had been committed to prison in 1913 under the terms of the Cat and Mouse Act, and twenty others for offences connected with the campaign. This gave a monthly average of five commitments, as compared with twenty-five earlier in the year, before the Act came into force. (As we shall see presently, the average for the first seven months of 1914 was also five commitments, as compared with an average of twenty *outrages* per month.)

Of these 48 persons, it was stated that 6 had completed their sentences, or their fines had been paid; 2 had given "undertakings"; 37<sup>1</sup> had disappeared, 7 of whom were known to be abroad.

**Damage attributed to Suffragettes in 1914**

It will therefore be interesting to see what the record of this "broken-up" organization was for the year 1914.

<sup>1</sup> 57 according to the *Suffragette*, January 14, 1914

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
Jan. 6	Haystack fired, Coulsdon	Slight	Croydon Advertiser.	Jan. 10			
" 8	St. Paul's College, Cheltenham	6,000 to 10,000	Daily Chronicle	" 9			
" 9	Bomb found, Stratford	Nil	Daily Telegraph	" 10			
" 24	Mansion gutted, Lanark	Many thousands	Times	" 26			
" 24	Bomb found, Glasgow	Not stated	"	" 26			
" 24	Pavilion destroyed, Lee	200	* Lewisham Journal	" 30			
Feb. 3	House of Ross gutted, Perth	5,000	Times	Feb. 5			
" 3	Abercuhill Castle gutted, Perth	Several hundreds	"	" 5			
" 3	St. Fillian's Castle gutted, Perth	Several thousands	"	" 5	One		Remanded on bail; afterwards acquitted.
" 7	Highland villa destroyed	2,000	Scotsman	" 9			
" 12	Carnegie Library destroyed, Birmingham	2,000	Times	" 13			
" 12	Bomb explosion, Moor Hall Green, Birmingham	Slight	"	" 13			
" 12	Station damaged, Wigan	"	"	" 13			
" 15	Crimean gun fired, Blackburn	Nil	Northern Daily Telegraph	" 16			
" 18	Stacks fired, Nottingham	100	Nottingham Guardian	" 19			



Date	Description	Value	* Surrey Comet	Feb. 25	6 months, Mar. 12	Released April 6, after forcible feed- ing. Rearrested May 20; released May 25, after for- cible feeding. Re- arrested June 6; released July 28. Afterwards under- went operation. (See p. 323.)
Feb. 22	Pavilion destroyed, Sur- biton	1,000	Western Gazette	"	"	
"	24 Redlynch House des- troyed, Somerset	40,000	Scotsman	"	"	
"	25 Windows smashed, Edin- burgh	Small	Times	"	"	
"	26 Whitekirk destroyed, East Lothian	10,000	Birmingham Daily Post	Mar. 2	"	
Mar.	1 Church doors defaced, Birmingham	Slight	Times	"	"	
"	1 Bomb explosion, St. John's, Westminster	"	Birmingham Daily Post	"	"	
"	1 Pavilion fired, Birming- ham	"	"	"	"	
"	1 "Golden Lion" fired, Birmingham	"	*Times	"	"	
"	2 Screen damaged, St. John's, Edinburgh	Value of screen 450	Bath and Wilts Chronicle	"	"	
"	3 Golf-links damaged, Bath	Not stated	Bath Herald	"	"	
"	5 Cornicks destroyed, Bath	450	Times	"	"	
"	10 Rokeby Venus mutilated	Value of picture, 45,000	Miss Richardson (a "mouse")	17	"	

See p. 330.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
Mar. 10	Bulcote Farm fired, Nottingham	2,000 to 3,000	Nottingham Guardian (1)	Mar. 11			
"	Mansion fired, Bruton, Somerset	100					
"	Windows smashed, Glasgow	20	Scotsman	" 13	One	10 days, Mar. 13 + 20 days or caution of £20	Released March 19, after forcible feeding. Rearrested April 7; Released April 12. Rearrested July 10; released July 16; disappeared.
"	Mansion fired, Birmingham	Slight	Birmingham Daily Post Times	" 12			
"	Robertsland House destroyed, Ayrshire	600		" 13			
"	Pavilion destroyed, Birmingham	300 to 400	Birmingham Daily Post	" 14			
"	Timber-yard destroyed, Bristol	3,000	Bath and Wilts Chronicle Times	" 15			
"	Mr. McKenna's windows smashed	Small		" 16	Six	2 months H.L.	All released within six days.
"	Cathedral defaced, Birmingham	Several hundreds	"	" 16			
"	Fire on Midland Railway, King's Norton	Not stated	Birmingham Daily Post Times	" 16			
"	Church fired, Clevedon, Somerset	50	"	" 23			



<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
April 9	Seaview House fired, Belfast	Not stated	Daily Telegraph	April 11			
"	9 Cases smashed, British Museum	5 or 6	Times	" 10	One	Not passed	Remanded in custody. Released April 15, after forcible feeding; disappeared.
"	10 Orlands Mansion destroyed, Belfast	Several thousands	"	June 4			
"	14 Station fired, Bangor	Not stated	Northern Whig	April 15			
"	16 House fired, Derry	500	"	" 17			
"	17 Pier destroyed, Yarmouth	10,000	Times	" 18			
"	17 Golf-links attacked, Bristol	—	Similar case to Bruton (Mar. 10)	" 18, and 20			
"	17 Music Hall fired, Kingston	Not stated	Times	" 18, and 20			
"	17 Grand - stand fired, Kempton	Small	"	" 18, and 20			
"	17 Hayrick destroyed, Bristol	100	Similar case to Bruton (Mar. 10)	" 20			
"	18 Tea - house destroyed, Belfast	Several thousands	Times	" 23			
"	22 Annadale House fired, Belfast	500	"	" 25			
"	24 Stacks destroyed, Nacton, Ipswich	200 to 300	Evening Star	" 27			
"	25 Grand-stand fired, Cardiff	Slight	Bristol Times				



April 26]	Stacks destroyed, Trim- ley, Ipswich	Several hundreds	East Anglian Times	April 29	Two	(a) 2 years, May 29; (b) 9 m'ths May 29	Forcibly fed on re- mand and after sentence till Aug. (King's Pardon.)
"	28 Bath Hotel destroyed, Felixstowe	40,000	Times	"			
"	28 Grand-stand fired, Ilford	Not stated	*Times	29			
May	3 Bomb found at reser- voir, Dewsbury	Nil	Daily News	May 5			
"	3 Pavilion destroyed, Bel- fast	500	Northern Whig	"			
"	4 Picture slashed, Royal Academy	Value of picture 750	Times	"	One (a "mouse")	Not passed	Remanded for a week and fed by force. Released May 9; disap- peared.
"	10 Explosion, Spurgeon's Tabernacle	Slight	"	"			
"	12 Portrait slashed, Royal Academy	15	"	"	One (a "mouse")	6 months, May 12	Fed by force until her release in Au- gust. (King's Par- don.)
"	15 Pavilion destroyed, Bir- mingham	600 to 700	Birmingham Daily Post	"			
"	17 Grand-stand destroyed, Several thousands Birmingham	Several thousands	"	"			
"	20 Furze fire, Aldershot	Slight	Daily Sketch	21			
"	21 Grange fire, Leicester	"	Times	23			
"	21 Windows smashed, Lon- don	Not stated	"	22	Sixty to seventy	From 7 days to 4 months	All released in a few days. Few re- arrests. (See p. 343.)
(and after)							

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
May 21	(Flat raided, Maida Vale)	—	Times	May 22	Five	One, 3 months, July 8; 4 acquitted	Forcibly fed seven weeks on remand, and after sentence. (See p. 346.) King's Pardon.
"	22 Five pictures slashed, National Gallery	Not stated	"	" 23	One (a "mouse")	6 months, May 26	Released June 5, after fifteen days' hunger and thirst strike. Subsequently seriously ill.
"	22 "Primavera" slashed, Royal Academy	Value of picture, 250	"	" 23	One	6 months, May 26	Forcibly fed until August. King's Pardon.
"	22 Explosion, Free Church, Edinburgh	Slight	Westminster Gazette	" 22			
"	22 Hospital fired, Dundee	2,000	People's Journal	" 23			
"	23 Bomb found, waterworks, Glasgow	Nil	Times	" 25			
"	23 (Lincoln's Inn House raided)	—	"	" 25	One	3 months, July 8	Forcibly fed seven weeks on remand, and after sentence. (See p. 346.) King's Pardon.
"	23 Portrait slashed, R.A., Edinburgh	Not stated	"	" 25	One	3 months, July 3	Released July 14, after forcible feeding; disappeared.

May 24	Mummy cases smashed, British Museum	Not stated	"	May 25	Two	(a) 2 months (b) 1 month	Released July 11, after forcible feeding; disappeared.
"	25 Shop windows cut, Leicester	Several hundreds	Leicester Mail	" 25			
"	27 Windows smashed, Buckingham Palace	Small	Times	" 28	Two	Not passed	Case dropped.
"	27 Golf-course attacked, Belfast	Not stated	Morning Post	" 28			
"	28 Bomb found, goods train Wellingborough	Nil	Daily News	" 29			
"	28 Windows smashed, National Gallery	Small	"	" 29	A "French-woman"	Not passed	Remanded for a week. Released; disappeared.
"	29 Pavilion fired, Nottingham ham	Slight	Observer	" 31			
"	31 Newhills Church fired, Aberdeen	Nil	Glasgow Herald	June 2			
June 1	Wargrave Church destroyed	Incalculable	Times	" 2			
"	1 "Willows" fired, Windsor	200 to 300	Daily Citizen	" 2			
"	1 "Nevill Holt" fired, Market Harborough	Slight	Standard	" 3			
"	2 "Ardmillan" fired, Belfast	Not stated	Northern Whig	" 3	Two (one a "mouse")	Not passed	Released June 8. Conditions given after release. Disappeared.
"	3 Pictures slashed, Doré Gallery	"	Times	" 4	One (a "mouse")	6 months, June 10	Fed by force till August. King's Par-don.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
June 3	Windows smashed, Criccieth	85	Daily News	June 4	Two: (a)	3 months, July 2	Fed by force on remand, and after sentence. Released July 7; disappeared.
"	Bomb found in Castle near Dundee	Nil	Evening Telegraph and Post	" 5	(b) (a "mouse")	3 months, July 2	Fed by force on remand, and after sentence. King's Pardon.
"	Breadsall Church destroyed	Incalculable	Daily Telegraph	" 6			
"	Mansion destroyed, High Wycombe	1,500	" "	" 8			
"	Tennis-courts attacked, Newquay	Slight	Western Morning News	" 8			
"	Church fired, Northampton	"	Daily Express	" 9			
"	Romney's picture slashed, Birmingham	Not stated	Birmingham Daily Post	" 9	One	Not passed	Fed by force on remand. Remanded on bail till June 16; too ill to appear subsequently.
"	Bomb explosion, Westminster Abbey	Slight	Daily News	" 12			
"	Golf-links attacked near Edinburgh	" Considerable "	Scotsman	" 12			



June	Nottingham fired near Nottingham	Slight	Nottingham Ex-June 13	One	2 months H.L., June 13	Released June 22. Rearrested (in bed) June 30; released July 8; disappeared.
12	Chipstead Church fired, Redhill	Nil	Daily Mail	"	13	
13	Windows smashed, Birmingham	Small	Birmingham Daily Mail	"	15	
13	Pavilion destroyed, Reigate	Not stated	Weekly Despatch	"	14	
13	Bomb found in a Church, Aston-on-Trent	Nil	Birmingham Daily Post	"	15	
15	Bomb explosion, St. George's, Hanover Sq.	Slight	Daily News	"	16	
15	Town Hall fired, Lynton	Slight	Western Daily Mercury	"	17	
16	Motor garage destroyed, Belfast	Not stated	Belfast Newsletter	"	17	
17	Golf-links attacked, Edinburgh	"Considerable"	Scotsman	"	18	
18	Parish Church fired, Beckenham	Slight	Daily Telegraph	"	19	
20	Station destroyed, Coed Poeth	Not stated	Westminster Gazette	"	20	
20	Pavilion destroyed, Bideford	160	Western Morning News	"	22	
24	Balylesson Church fired, Belfast	Slight	Northern Whig	"	26	
25	Pavilion destroyed, Barnes	Several hundreds	* Daily Telegraph	"	26	

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Outrage.</i>	<i>Damage in £.</i>	<i>Reported in</i>	<i>Date.</i>	<i>Arrests.</i>	<i>Sentence.</i>	<i>Remarks.</i>
June 25	(At Nottingham)	—	Times	June 26	One (a "mouse")	15 months H.L., July 27	Arrested in possession of explosives. Taken to Holloway under Cat and Mouse Act; fed by force; sentenced July 27. King's Pardon.
"	26 Alderson's premises fired, Nottingham	1,000 to 2,000	Nottingham Guardian	" 27			
"	26 Villa fired, Bath	Slight	Bath Herald	" 27			
"	27 Cooke and Co.'s premises fired, Nottingham	"	*Nottingham Express	" 29			
"	28 Organ flooded, Albert Hall	2,000	Daily Telegraph	" 30			
"	29 Liversidge and Co.'s premises fired, London	Many thousands	Daily Mail	" 30			
"	29 Sharp's premises fired, London	"	"	" 30			
"	29 Papplewick Hall fired, Nottingham	Slight	Nottingham Guardian	" 30			
July 3	Carmichael Church fired, Lanark	Slight	Times	July 4			
"	3 Ballymenoch House gutted, Ulster	20,000	Belfast Newsletter	" 4			
"	5 Timber-yard fired, Edinburgh	Not stated	Edinburgh Evening Despatch	" 6			

July	8 Bomb found, Burns' cottage	Nil	Daily News	July	9 One	Not passed	Remanded in custody. Released July 16; disappeared.
"	11 Bomb explosion, Roslyn Chapel	Slight	Edinburgh Evening News	" 13			
"	12 Blaby Station destroyed, Leicester	500	Daily News	" 13			
"	12 Bomb explosion, St. John's, Westminster	Slight	Times	" 13	One (a "mouse")	Not passed	Remanded in custody. King's pardon.
"	12 Volunteer Hospital fired, Ulster	"	Belfast Newsletter	" 13			
"	14 Cocker Hall fired, near Newcastle	"	Newcastle Daily Chronicle	" 15			
"	15 School fired, Lanark	"	* Scotsman	" 16			
"	17 Carlyle's portrait slashed, National Portrait Gallery	Value of picture, 1,200	Morning Post	" 18	One	6 months, July 21	Released July 27; disappeared.
"	19 Marquee destroyed, Dulwich	80	Forest Hill Examiner	" 24			
"	20 Station fired, Hampstead Heath	Not stated	* Hampstead Express	Aug. 1			
"	22 House fired, Yardley	"	Birmingham Daily Mail	July 23			
"	23 Station fired, Coatdyke	"	Glasgow Evening Times	" 23			
"	24 Haystacks fired, Bath	220	Bath and Wilts Chronicle	" 25	One	Not passed	Remanded on bail; case deferred.
"	29 Race-stand fired, Newtownards	750	Belfast Newsletter	" 30			
"	31 Pier fired, Colwyn Bay	Slight	Sunday Chronicle	Aug. 2			

The first seven months of the year have been chosen for the purpose of special investigation, for at the beginning of this period only one woman was in prison, and at the end she, with nine other convicted prisoners and several remand prisoners, was liberated, by the King's command, a few days after the outbreak of the European War. Thus the period selected has certain well-defined limits.

The table on pp. 306-317 shows both the extent of the militant campaign and the operation of the Cat and Mouse Act. It has been compiled from a variety of sources, as will be seen, and, as regards the number of outrages committed or attempted, is probably an understatement, for doubtless many cases were never reported in the Press at all. It may, however, claim to be complete in one respect—namely, the number of arrests effected, and the subsequent history of those who brought themselves within reach of the law. To this there is but one exception, and that is the number of arrests which took place in connection with the deputation to the King on May 21, for, as will be shown, it is a sheer impossibility to give an exact account of what occurred on that day and on succeeding days.

In by far the larger number of the cases given in the preceding table, the facts are recorded in a large number of papers. For the sake of convenience, only one has been selected in each case, though it may happen that the figure representing the estimated damage is taken from another paper. In a few cases, marked by an asterisk, there is no specific reference to Suffragettes; but evidence of incendiaries having been at work is mentioned, or the general character of the occurrence bears a striking resemblance to those as to which there is no doubt. As a rule messages of an unmistakable kind were left behind. It has been found necessary to omit all reference to attacks on letter-boxes and on telegraph and telephone wires, and malicious fire-calls, as they are far too numerous to be ascertained or recorded.



The following is a short summary of the foregoing table. The figures in parentheses show the number of arrests.

	<i>Total Number of Outrages.</i>	<i>Arson.</i>	<i>Works of Art.</i>	<i>Window-Breaking, excluding May 21 and Following Days.</i>	<i>Other Outrages.</i>
January	6 (0)	6	—	—	—
February	13 (1)	11 (1)	—	1	1
March	23 (8)	16	1 (1)	2 (7)	4
April	22 (5)	19 (3)	1 (1)	1 (1)	1
May	24 (10)	11	6 (7)	3 (3)	4
June	35 (7)	27 (2)	2 (2)	2 (3)	4
July	18 (4)	17 (3)	1 (1)	—	—
Total	141 (35)	107 (9)	11 (12)	9 (14)	14

Window-smashers were, for obvious reasons, more liable to arrest than other offenders, and attention may be drawn to the fact that in their case the full rigours of the Act were enforced (see March 11.)

In the case of attacks on pictures and other works of art, escape was of course impossible, and was, clearly, not contemplated. Those, therefore, committing this offence, did so in the full knowledge of all that their act would entail. More than one magistrate expressed his regret that the maximum sentence which the law permitted him to impose was only one of six months' imprisonment, and every possible effort appears to have been made to make these prisoners serve their sentences.

Of the 12 arrested for damage to works of art, 3 were never sentenced, although the trial usually took place with the least possible delay; 4 disappeared on being temporarily released after serving a short period of the sentence; 2 were so seriously ill that further proceedings were necessarily abandoned; 3 were released at the outbreak of war.

The figures under the heading "arson," are clearly the most

significant, for in these cases it was the declared object of the criminals to avoid detection. The figures are as follows: 107 cases were reported in the Press, exclusive of attacks on letter-boxes; 9 women were arrested in the act of committing arson; 3 of these were sentenced, of whom 2 were in prison when war broke out; 6 were released while on remand.

In all, of the 35 arrests effected, 6 prisoners were released while on remand, and disappeared; 1 was acquitted; 5 of the cases were dropped (2 on account of the outbreak of war).

Of the 23 sentences pronounced, 11 were for the comparatively trivial offence of window-breaking; 3 were for arson; 9 were for damage to works of art.

Well might a correspondent of *The Times*, writing in the issue of March 13, observe: "The employment of all the solemn paraphernalia of judicial machinery in dealing with these defiant and insolent law breakers becomes merely farcical." And well might some doubt arise as to whether the Cat and Mouse Act were really "effecting its purpose."

It should be noted that forcible feeding was applied in the case of many prisoners, even remand prisoners, although the Act had been ostensibly introduced as an alternative to that admittedly objectionable process.

### **Rearrests of 1913 "Mice"**

Altogether 21 "mice" disappeared during the seven months under consideration, eight of them being 1913 offenders. The latter were released after various periods of imprisonment, as the following summary will show, none of them being in prison at the time of the outbreak of war. The figures correspond with those given on pp. 286, 7.

18. Sentenced July, 1913, to three years' penal servitude in connection with the outrage at Hurst Park. Rearrested January 6; released April 16, after being fed by force 232 times.
27. Short sentence, July, 1913, for window-breaking. Rearrested January; fine paid anonymously.

11. Sentenced April, 1913, to six weeks' imprisonment. Rearrested January 16; was fed by force while finishing sentence. Released on bail, February 12, being charged with outrage at Lady White's house (March, 1913). Sentenced, February 24, to eighteen months' hard labour. Released March 20, on giving an "undertaking."
28. Sentenced August, 1913, to one month's imprisonment. Was twice rearrested in 1913. Rearrested January 19; released January 22, after hunger strike. See also May 12 in above table for 1914.
5. Sentenced March, 1913, to nine months' imprisonment. Was once rearrested in 1913. Rearrested January 23; released January 27 after hunger strike. Rearrested June 23; released June 27.
25. Sentenced October, 1913, to eight months' imprisonment. Rearrested February 18; released hastily February 25, double pneumonia having followed forcible feeding. See p. 329.
29. Had been three times released in 1913 while a prisoner on remand (see p. 248). Rearrested May 4. Sentenced, May 8, to twelve months' imprisonment. Released May 12, after forcible feeding.
16. Sentenced May, 1913, to nine months' imprisonment. Was twice rearrested in 1913. Rearrested May 2; released May 6, after hunger strike. Took prominent part in Ipswich by-election. Rearrested June 18; released July 26, after being fed by force.

### **Mrs. Pankhurst's Movements**

A bare summary of facts gives, however, but a faint idea of the condition of affairs. Throughout these months Mrs. Pankhurst was constantly reappearing at unexpected times and places, and the occasion of her four rearrests was the occasion also for renewed demonstrations of various kinds. Thus, in February she made two public speeches from the balconies of private houses in London, and on each occasion a fierce encounter afterwards took place between her organized "bodyguard" and the police. Several women were arrested each time, but Mrs. Pankhurst herself was not one of the captives.

### Her Rearrest at Glasgow

The following month Mrs. Pankhurst was publicly announced to speak at Glasgow, and she did indeed appear on the platform of St. Andrew's Hall, where some 5,000 persons were assembled on the evening of March 9. She had just begun her speech on the text of equal political, legal, industrial, and social justice for men and women, when the platform (which, as it proved, was protected by barbed wire) was stormed by the police, and in spite of fierce resistance on the part of her supporters she was once more arrested. In the *Evening News* over the signature Andrew Sloan, a letter appeared testifying to the fact that the writer saw a constable deliberately strike Mrs. Pankhurst on the head, and several other persons bore witness to the fact that very great violence was used on this occasion. Mrs. Pankhurst was thrown upon the floor of a taxi (the seats being occupied by police officers, each of whom was anxious to claim the credit of having arrested her), and was conveyed to the Central Police Station, where she passed the night. She adopted the hunger strike, and was conveyed the following day to London, in a fasting condition. She was put on board the train at Coatbridge, and taken off at Loudoun Road; and not only was there a large band of detectives on the train, but every station at which it stopped, and Euston itself, were strongly guarded. An army of detectives also guarded the approach to Holloway when its gates once more swung open to receive her. Mrs. Pankhurst announced her intention of challenging the authorities to feed her by force.

### Progressive Militancy—Mutilation of the Rokeby Venus

All these details were not known to the public generally, but a protest made the day after Mrs. Pankhurst's arrest attracted as much general attention as the event at the Derby of the preceding summer, and aroused intense indignation. This was the hacking of the famous Rokeby Venus in the



National Gallery, by Miss Mary Richardson. This time the offender was able to give an account of herself and her motives. In a written statement she said: "I have tried to destroy the picture of the most beautiful woman in mythological history, as a protest against the Government destroying Mrs. Pankhurst, who is the most beautiful character in modern history. . . . If there is an outcry against my deed, let everyone remember that such an outcry is hypocrisy as long as they allow the destruction of Mrs. Pankhurst and other beautiful women." On making her appearance at the police court, Miss Richardson remarked that it was impossible to make her serve her sentence, as she would either have to be released or killed. She added she was not afraid of dying, and added: "Either way, mine is the victory."

She received the maximum sentence of six months' imprisonment two days later, the trial having been specially hurried on, as she immediately adopted the hunger strike, and it was obvious that it would be physically impossible for her to stand her trial at the end of the month, as originally arranged. Forcible feeding was employed, but was not successful in keeping her in prison more than three to four weeks, and she was released on April 6 gravely ill with appendicitis.

Some fifteen public galleries were closed at this period.

### **Miss Richardson's Previous Record**

The summary of Miss Richardson's prison record for 1914 given in the table on p. 307 tells only a part of the story. A summary appeared in the *Globe* of July 30, 1913, of her arrests in that year, and the following is an amplification, omitting anything prior to the passing of the Cat and Mouse Act. Her record is yet another illustration of the operation of that Act, and also of the progressively serious nature of the crimes committed by the same individual after it came into force.

3.

- July 4. Arrested for attempting to petition the King at Bristol. Discharged.
- July 8. Sentenced to three months' hard labour for her share in the disturbances at the Bromley Hall, when Miss Sylvia Pankhurst was forcibly arrested. Released in four days.
- July 18. Sentenced to one month's hard labour for breaking windows at the Home Office, and for throwing an inkpot through a window at the police-station. If people did not see the sin of the Act, she would demonstrate its absurdity, she said to the magistrate, adding that breaking the windows in question was all the hard labour she had done. Released five days later.
- July 28. (afternoon). Arrested in connection with the disturbances at the Pavilion, when Miss Kenney was violently rearrested. Released on bail.
- July 28. (evening). Arrested for breaking windows outside Holloway Gaol. Sentenced the next day to two months' imprisonment. Released August 3.
- Aug. 8. Arrested for breaking windows at the Colonial Office. Committed for trial the following day. Released August 12.
- Oct. 4. Arrested for arson at Hampton; remanded till November and forcibly fed. Released October 25 in a critical condition, an operation being considered imminent. Too ill to stand her trial.

Small wonder that the authorities were at their wits' end in dealing with this case. Miss Richardson reported that, during her imprisonment in August, Dr. Pearson, the Medical Officer of Holloway, warned her that another time she would be kept until she was a skeleton and a nervous and mental wreck, and that she would then be sent to an institution where they looked after such cases. On August 11, 1913, Mr. Wedgwood had quoted these words in the House, and asked for information on the subject. Mr. McKenna denied that they had been used, but said that a serious warning had been given. Be that as it may, Dr. Pearson was waylaid by four Suffragettes on

August 9, and belaboured with a dog-whip, and that evening his windows were smashed. No arrests were made on either occasion, the police contenting themselves with taking possession of the offending dog-whip.

### Indignation in Glasgow

Meanwhile the events connected with Mrs. Pankhurst's arrest in Glasgow had aroused a storm of indignation in that city. The *Glasgow Herald* in its leading article of March 12 spoke of the "widespread feeling of disgust and indignation" aroused by the mishandling of the affair by the police, of which its correspondence columns offered copious evidence. Assuming for the sake of argument, said this paper, that it was desirable to prevent Mrs. Pankhurst from addressing the meeting, it argued a discreditable inefficiency, on the part of the police, not to have been able to prevent her appearance on the platform. It further maintained that the collaboration of the Glasgow police with the Metropolitan envoys was a blunder from first to last. Again, the *Daily Record and Daily Mail* of March 16 urged that considerations of the relation of Scottish and English law were involved, which it was of paramount importance the Town Council should immediately consider.

Within a few days—*i.e.*, on March 17—a large and influential body of Glasgow citizens journeyed to London, where they had an interview with Scottish Members of Parliament, who fully agreed that a stringent public inquiry was called for. The chairman, Mr. Scott Dickson, Member for Glasgow (Central), advised the deputation to bring the matter before the Town Council in the first instance.

A deputation accordingly waited on the Glasgow Corporation the following Thursday (March 19), and restated the case. The Town Clerk, Mr. Lindsay, who was upheld by the Lord Provost, ruled that the deputation was not in order, as the Corporation had no jurisdiction over the police, and after the

deputation had withdrawn a stormy scene occurred, when members of the Corporation shouted each other down, and one of them called the Town Clerk a "legal trickster," an expression which he was called upon by the Lord Provost to withdraw.

Meanwhile on March 12, a deputation of Glasgow women rate-payers, with Miss Janie Allan as spokeswoman, had waited on the magistrates of the city. All the members of this deputation were able to bear witness as to what had occurred, some of them having received injuries at the hands of the police. (Others were too ill to be present.) These women based their claim to be heard on the fact that they paid rates and taxes, the police rate among others, and they protested strongly against the conduct of the police. Miss Allan's protest, with written statements from doctors and others as to the injuries which had been sustained, was remitted to the Chief Constable for report, and after some delay this report was issued.

On March 30 a deputation of men citizens and rate-payers, who had been present at the St. Andrew's Hall meeting, waited on the magistrates, and made a strong appeal for a public inquiry. After the deputation had withdrawn, the Chief Constable's report was considered by the magistrates. It admitted that a force of 159 police officers, fifty of whom were in plain clothes, was present at the hall to effect Mrs. Pankhurst's arrest, and that Superintendent Douglas, who had charge of the arrangements, had been instructed not to do so until she left the platform, if she should succeed in making her appearance there. Many of the statements made by eye-witnesses of what occurred were, however, denied. The chief discrepancy between the accounts given by the Chief Constable (who had not been present himself), and those present in the hall, was that the latter alleged that the police stormed the platform with their batons already drawn, while the police version was that they were only drawn in self-defence. (The



fact that determined resistance was offered by some of those present was never disputed, but it was urged that the proper course would have been to arrest them.)

This report was severely criticized by the *Glasgow Evening News* of that evening, in its leading article. It characterized the affair as "altogether most unsatisfactory," and the action of the police as "blundering" and "precipitate." It was remitted by the magistrates to a sub-committee for consideration and report.

On April 9 this sub-committee reported that it saw no cause for complaint against the police, but recommended the magistrates' committee to forward all the documents relating to the affair to the Secretary for Scotland for his consideration, with the request, that, if he should be of opinion that a public inquiry was called for, he would appoint a Commissioner for the purpose.

A communication to this effect was accordingly sent on April 20, and a memorial was also sent to the Secretary for Scotland by Miss Allan, who pointed out that the Magistrates, being the authority responsible for the police, in a matter between the latter and the citizens, they (the magistrates) could not be said to be an independent tribunal, nor could their finding be regarded as satisfactory. She offered to supply statements on oath as to individual cases of assault, an offer which had been made to the magistrates, but of which they had not availed themselves.

In due course, a reply was received. This was dated May 12, and was to the effect that, under the Glasgow Police Acts, the magistrates' committee was the responsible authority on whom devolved the duty of determining whether further inquiry were called for. The letter, however, contained the following offer: "If, having come to the conclusion that further inquiry is expedient, they (that is, the magistrates) desire that the Secretary for Scotland should nominate a Commissioner for that purpose, he will be glad to consider a request

to that effect." This passage was suppressed in a communication issued for the information of the Corporation, by the magistrates' committee, after a special meeting held on May 15. This omission was pointed out in a letter to the Press by Miss Allan, which appeared on July 24 (see *Glasgow Evening Times*, etc.). At this special meeting it was unanimously resolved that, in the discharge of the statutory responsibility imposed on them, there was no reason for further inquiry in the case, and there the matter ended.

All this has been given in some detail, as it affords another instance of the manner in which the civil rights of citizens were ignored, in the effort to prevent the unenfranchised from establishing their claims. The treatment meted out to the various deputations which sought an interview with the Prime Minister on the subject of the Cat and Mouse Act, a few months previously, has already been described.

### **Mrs. Pankhurst in East Fife—W.S.P.U. Meeting at Lowestoft**

Mrs. Pankhurst was once more released after five days' imprisonment, and was once more carefully tended by an experienced nurse. She was examined by Dr. Schutze, who certified her to be suffering from various bruises and abrasions, "all evidencing the marked degree of violence to which she had been subjected." During the whole of her imprisonment she lay on the floor of her cell, refusing all nourishment.

In spite of all she had gone through, she undertook to oppose Mr. Asquith in his constituency of East Fife, where he was seeking re-election on being appointed Minister of War. A vigorous campaign was carried on by the W.S.P.U., which did not come to an end when it was announced that the Unionists did not propose to contest the seat. Mrs. Pankhurst actually went to East Fife, but took no public part in the campaign, as this decision had then been announced. In consequence of the fatigue this journey entailed, she was unable to speak, as advertised, at Lowestoft, where the Annual Conference of the

National Union of Teachers took place in April. A substitute was, however, found in the person of Miss Kenney, who spoke to a crowded audience at the Hippodrome on April 15, and afterwards left the hall surrounded by her bodyguard, without interference on the part of the police.

### **Militancy in Scotland**

The fight was not confined to one locality, nor did it centre exclusively round the leaders of the militant movement. On February 18 a "mouse," who had been at large since the previous October, had been arrested and conveyed to Calton Gaol, Edinburgh, and for the first time forcible feeding was employed in a Scottish prison. It was not, however, instrumental in detaining the prisoner for any length of time, for within a week she was released in such a critical condition that, throughout the previous night, two nurses had sat up with her and a priest had been summoned to her bedside. The doctor in whose care she was placed on her release found her to be suffering from pneumonia due to the injection of food into the lungs. The medical officers of the prison had taken no part in the operation, which was performed by young men from the asylum for three or four days, and later by an "expert." Full responsibility in the matter was accepted by Dr. Devon, the Medical Commissioner for Scotland, who in his book, "The Criminal and the Community," published two years previously, had referred (p. 249) to forcible feeding in the following words: "It is folly if not worse to enter upon any course that cannot be carried on indefinitely. . . . If the women required to be fed artificially, it by no means follows that it was the proper thing to do so in prison. It certainly was indiscreet, and it is difficult to see how, if it was justifiable to resort to this measure in order to save the life of a prisoner, it could be argued that a medical officer would not be equally justified in cutting off the injured or diseased arm of a prisoner, in spite of his protestations, in order to save his life. It is one thing to place



the liberties of men, and another thing altogether to place their lives in the hands of the officials."

A few days later Dr. Devon experienced the same humiliating treatment that had been meted out to Dr. Pearson the previous year.

The day after the prisoner's release in the condition described, one of a series of serious fires in Scotland occurred. The historic church of Whitekirk, which had stoutly resisted the civil and religious wars of centuries, was reduced to ruins. A Bible of great antiquity and value, a cherished possession, was involved in the disaster. No arrests were made. Replying to a question in the House on March 9, concerning the prison treatment in Calton Gaol, Mr. McKinnon Wood specifically mentioned the burning of this church as one among many recent cases of arson which had occurred in Scotland, and had been attributed to Suffragettes, though on a later date (March 31) he disclaimed having made the suggestion that this particular individual was concerned therewith.

### **Militancy in Ireland**

Ireland was also the scene of startling events, but properly to understand them a résumé must here be given of the history of some six months. This summary is instructive, in that it is an epitome of the various stages of the militant agitation, which in this instance succeeded one another with phenomenal celerity. Briefly these stages were: Constitutional work; deputations, extraction of pledges; repudiation of pledges; declaration of war; arrest of leaders; defiance of the law. More fully the record is as follows:

Early in September, 1913, Sir Edward Carson, having announced his intention of taking over the Government of Ulster, the W.S.P.U. decided to organize a campaign in Ulster, and Miss Dorothy Evans was placed in charge. She immediately wrote to Sir Edward Carson, asking him, on his arrival in Belfast, to receive a deputation who would demand that



women should have the same rights under the Ulster Constitution as men. She pointed out that just as he and his supporters were preparing for armed rebellion as a protest against being brought under a system of government to which they did not give their consent, so militant women were refusing to submit to government without their consent. A letter was received by Mr. Hamill, Secretary of the Ulster Unionist Women's Council, dated September 10, informing him that the draft articles of Provisional Government included the franchise for women on the basis of the Local Government Register. This letter was signed by Mr. R. Lawson Bates, Secretary of the Ulster Unionist Council. Attempts to induce Sir Edward Carson and his colleagues to make a definite pronouncement on the subject in their public utterances were, however, unsuccessful. Women who asked questions at his meetings on the subject were not treated in the outrageous manner customary at Liberal gatherings, it is true, but their questions remained unanswered. The movement obtained a secure footing in Ireland in 1913, and organizers sprang up in Cork, Dublin, and other places besides Belfast, the Cork organizer being no other than one of the "conspirators" of June, 1913, now a "mouse."

### **The W.S.P.U. and Sir Edward Carson**

Early in the following March, Miss Dorothy Evans wrote to Sir Edward Carson, saying that, in view of his recent speech in the House, in which he had not rejected the suggestion that Ulster should be excluded from the scope of the Home Rule Bill, the Ulster W.S.P.U. wished to remind him of the solemn pledge that had been given them some months previously, regarding their representation under the Provisional Government then contemplated, and that he was thereby bound to insist that the enfranchisement of Ulster women should form part of any arrangement made, and to see that they had the right of voting for the Imperial Parliament, if Ulster remained

under its control. Miss Evans followed up her letter by calling personally on Sir Edward Carson at his London residence, when she was informed that he was indisposed, and unable to see anyone. Some further correspondence ensued, and on Friday, March 6, a deputation of Ulster women presented itself at his door, having previously sent word that it refused to go away until the desired interview was granted. The "siege" lasted day and night until the following Monday, when three members of the deputation (Sir Edward Carson's "step-children," as they were facetiously called by a wag in the crowd) were admitted. Sir Edward professed himself by no means offended at the persistence shown, for as a fighting man he could, he said, see the force of such a policy. He, however, declared that he was only the leader of the small section of the Unionist party representing Ulster for the purpose of opposing Home Rule, and that his colleagues were not united upon this other question, and he did not propose to cause dissension by introducing it. He paid a tribute to the fine work that was being done by Ulster Unionist women, and said that what he most admired about them was the way they had been prepared to sink everything in the face of the common danger of Home Rule.

A few days later Miss Evans wrote once more, saying that this statement was regarded as completely unsatisfactory by the members of the Ulster branch of the W.S.P.U., and that, as war had thus been declared, the Suffragettes took up the challenge.

The very next night the contents of several letter-boxes in Belfast burst into flames. Churches, theatres, picture palaces, etc., became the scene of protests as in London and elsewhere, and before the end of the month the destruction of Abbeylands, a beautiful mansion near Belfast, betokened that hostilities had begun in earnest. The house itself had been empty for long, and it was but a short time previously that the grounds

had been placed at the disposal of the Ulster volunteers, for military evolutions.

No arrest was made at the time, but early in April, after an attempt had been made to fire Lisburn Castle, the police raided the W.S.P.U. office in Belfast, and also Miss Evans' private rooms, and arrested her and Miss Muir, on a charge of having explosives in their possession. They were remanded on bail till the following Wednesday.

### **" Trial " of Miss Evans and Miss Muir**

The day on which Miss Evans and Miss Muir were arrested in Belfast was the day of the great Unionist rally in Hyde Park (of which more presently), when Mrs. Drummond was arrested, and, on being brought into Court, succeeded in holding up the proceedings. Similarly, when the two Irish militants were brought into Court before Mr. Nagle, on Wednesday, April 8, scenes of an extraordinary description took place. From the moment of entering the Court, the defendants announced their intention of doing the talking, and they faithfully kept their word. They persisted in comparing the offence of which they were charged with that of Sir Edward Carson, Captain Craig, and their friends, who, as was well known, had arms and ammunition in their possession, which meant danger to life as well as property. The two prisoners kept up a duet, which reduced the proceedings to an absolute farce. Every now and then they would announce their intention of leaving the Court, and were only restrained from so doing by physical force. The only lull which occurred was after one of these struggles with the police, when Miss Evans collapsed in a fainting condition, and was carried out. On her return, she found that Miss Muir had continued to interrupt the proceedings in her absence, and she once more joined in. Both were finally removed with great violence, bail being refused.

Similar scenes took place on several subsequent occasions, but a bare summary of events must suffice. It is as follows:

- April 8. Defendants remanded in custody till April 14, bail not being allowed.
- 11. Bail offered, and refused by prisoners.
  - 12. Unconditional release.
  - 20. Case comes on; defendants not present.
  - 21. They are rearrested without warrants, which are produced later. Scenes of violence take place in Court. Defendants are tried separately. Trial is adjourned, bail being offered and refused.
  - 22. Trial is resumed amid further confusion. It is again adjourned, bail being once more offered and refused.
  - 25. Defendants are released after hunger strike, "conditions" of release being flung into the taxi-cab in which they are removed from Crumlin Gaol, as it drives out of the prison yard.
- June 2. Miss Muir is arrested on another charge.
- 8. She is released after hunger strike, and disappears.
- July 20. A true bill is found against both defendants on first charge.
- 21. Miss Evans is rearrested at the Lord Mayor's house, where she had taken refuge.
  - 22. She is brought before Mr. Justice Dodd at the Assize Court, but keeps up such a stream of interruption that the Judge refuses to proceed with the trial, and remands defendant to the Assizes six months later, with questionable legality.
  - 25. Released after another hunger strike.

An instance of the forcible release of a particularly refractory prisoner would appear to be the only impossible situation which did not occur in the course of the struggle.

The number of serious fires which occurred in or near Belfast while the ringleaders were *hors de combat* is not without significance.

### Lord Selborne's Bill in the House of Lords

There can be no doubt as to the indignation and disgust aroused in the country by the doings of the militants, of which the foregoing pages give some idea, so much so that the reason



for the agitation was increasingly lost sight of, especially among that large section of the public which was indifferent on the subject. The hostility of such persons, no less than of the active opponents of the principle, was sedulously cultivated by the Press, whose policy it was to suppress such things as the methods adopted towards Suffragettes, or what they had to say in extenuation of their offence, while making the utmost of their acts of militancy, which, failing such explanation, were easily represented to be the deeds of irresponsible fanatics. The result was that the militants, finding that constitutional work and appeals to reason were alike useless, addressed themselves to the task of planning and committing still more reckless acts, with the idea of bringing the public to a realization of the state of affairs.

However, an effort was made to secure a discussion of the subject by Lord Selborne, who introduced an unofficial Bill into the Lords. A two days' debate took place on May 5 and 6, which was characterized by considerable dignity and recognition of the seriousness of the situation. The Bill was a one-clause Bill, drafted with the object of conferring the Parliamentary franchise on women, who already possessed the Municipal franchise—that is, about one million women.

Lord Selborne, in introducing his Bill, said that that House was not in the unfortunate position of the Lower House, which had passed Suffrage Bills by large majorities, until the question came to be one of practical politics, and who pleaded for the utilization in the service of the State of women's special experience. He was opposed by Lord Curzon, who argued that the principle was not a question of opinion, and stated as a fact that the enfranchisement of women would be injurious to them and to the State. He pointed out that married women would be excluded, and argued that, if women were given votes at all, it should not be on such a narrow basis. Like every other speaker who mentioned the subject, he vigorously denounced militancy, and urged Lord Selborne

and other supporters to withdraw all help while it lasted. Having, as he said, dealt only with the fringe of the subject, he moved the reading of the Bill six months later.

The most notable contribution to the first day's debate was made by the Bishop of London, who proclaimed himself a recent convert to the cause, adding whimsically that it was, however, hardly a tactful way of bringing about his conversion, to place a bomb under his seat in St. Paul's. He gave facts and figures in support of his contention that women were by no means indifferent to public duties, and showed how artificial restrictions had barred their way in avenues of usefulness formerly open to them—the result of their votelessness. He maintained that they were intimately concerned with such questions as housing, infant mortality, Sunday closing, and the raising of the age of consent, which matters had been improved in countries where women had the vote, as he again demonstrated by statistics.

The following day Lord Courtney and Lord Willoughby de Broke both referred to this speech, and complained that it had been but meagrely reported in *The Times*, whereas the speeches of Lord Curzon and others had been reported verbatim. This was disputed in the next day's issue, but in point of fact seven times as much space had been devoted to Lord Curzon's speech as to the Bishop's, though, according to the official report, the one was not double the length of the other. This is a minor point, but it serves to illustrate the bias which even reports of debates were dealt with, and therefore helps to relate the history of this period of the struggle better than mere résumés of the speeches would do.

It must here be sufficient to add that, in all, eighteen speeches were delivered, the majority of which were in favour of the Bill. Lord Haldane spoke in its support, but remarked that no Government could accept responsibility in the matter. Lord Crewe spoke and voted against it. Lord Lytton wound up the debate on the second day, in a long and eloquent speech

in which he dealt incidentally with the oft-repeated contention—that women's disabilities were imposed by Nature—by remarking that it was in 1832 that women were first excluded from the franchise. He enumerated Acts of Parliament that especially concerned them, gave figures as to the relative number of single, married, and widowed women in the country, and pointed out that the first-named, in particular, were more and more competing with men in the industrial world, and yet they were told that they were represented by the very men with whom they were competing. If women had had the vote, he said, it would have been impossible for the Government to have dealt with their demands as it had done. He also gave statistics, showing the support the question had in the country, and quoted this remark of Gladstone's when he was assured that agricultural labourers did not want the vote: "I am not concerned whether they want it: the State wants it for them." He concluded with a very feeling allusion to militancy, saying that, whereas he had more reason than anyone for hating and detesting it, the effect could be to make him do everything in his power to put a stop to the deplorable waste of idealism, courage, devotion, heroism, and self-sacrifice, which it involved. All shared responsibility in the matter, he said, especially those who supported the principle, but did nothing to put it into practice.

The division took place about 8 p.m. on the second day, and there voted—for the bill, 60; against, 104. It was thus lost by 44 votes, and ordered to be read again six months later. (Official Reports, Lords, Vol. 16.)

### **The Free Speech Demonstration**

When it was announced that Sir Edward Carson and others who were advocating armed resistance to the Home Rule Bill in Ulster were arranging to hold a great demonstration in Hyde Park on April 4, a demand was immediately advanced by the W.S.P.U. that the veto on its meetings should be



removed. This demand being refused, the Union announced its intention of holding the meeting all the same, and of taking a vehicle into the Park to be used as a platform. Accordingly when the day arrived, shortly before the time arranged for the twenty-two processions in support of Ulster militancy to converge upon the Park, an unauthorized procession formed up in Tothill Street, to escort Mrs. Drummond to the same destination. It was allowed to enter the Park at the Marble Arch unmolested, but shortly afterwards the police turned aside the dogcart in which sat the "General," and a struggle ensued. Mrs. Drummond, however, succeeded in addressing the crowd from the cart, which she afterwards quitted, and made several attempts at speaking from other less conventional positions; for she was lifted up by men supporters, sometimes for as much as fifteen minutes together. She was eventually arrested, but many other members of the procession took up her task, and made impromptu speeches from some point of vantage. Even the Unionist lorries were occupied for a few minutes before the orators were dislodged by the police.

### **Novel Police Court Procedure**

When Mrs. Drummond was charged the following Monday before Mr. Denman at the Marlborough Street Police Court, the remarkable scenes already referred to took place. The defendant demanded, and continued to demand, why she was there, while Sir Edward Carson and other militant Ulstermen were not, and announced her intention of not acknowledging the jurisdiction of the Court, and of "doing the talking" herself, which she accordingly did. She was three times removed from the Court, and as Mr. Muskett, who prosecuted, complained that he could not make his voice heard above hers, the evidence was eventually taken in her absence, and she was remanded in custody till the Wednesday, being thoughtfully provided with a copy of the evidence. On making her reappearance, in spite of two days' hunger strike, she maintained



the same flow of language, and the proceedings of the law were completely eclipsed. At one point in the proceedings the prisoner broke loose from the dock, and being foiled in her attempt to leave the Court, she made her way to the part reserved for the solicitors, much to the consternation of the gentlemen there seated. A hand-to-hand struggle with several burly constables ensued, in the course of which the prisoner snatched a whistle from one of them, and hurled it at the presiding magistrate, who thereupon lost but little time in bringing the proceeding to a close by pronouncing sentence of "forty shillings or one month." The fine was paid anonymously, and the "General" retired. A very serious phase of the campaign had, however, been inaugurated.

### **Outrage at the Royal Academy**

Militancy was not by any means at a standstill. Not only was it rampant in Scotland and Ireland, but instances of its ubiquitous character were an explosion at St. Martin-in-the-Fields, and the destruction of Yarmouth Pier and of the Bath Hotel, Felixstowe. In connection with the last-named outrage two women were arrested, who refused their names and all information about themselves. As a protest against the secret police court trial, and against their forcible feeding in Ipswich Gaol, while on remand, another sensational event took place, this time at the Royal Academy. Sargent's presentation portrait of Mr. Henry James was attacked with a hatchet on May 4, and irretrievably damaged. The perpetrator of this deed was of course arrested, and was herself subjected to forcible feeding; but not for long, for she had to be released before the day fixed for her trial and the police were unable to discover her whereabouts.

### **Second Reading of the Government of Scotland Bill**

When the Scottish Home Rule Bill of 1914 reached its Second Reading on May 15, it was found that the following clause had been added to the Bill of the previous year:

“VII. (6) Every woman who if she were a man would be entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary elector in respect of a household qualification within the meaning of the Representation of the People Act, 1884, or is the wife of a man entitled to be registered . . . shall be entitled to be registered, provided she has attained the age of twenty-five. A woman shall not be disqualified by reason of marriage from being registered and voting.”

Among those who opposed this clause was Mr. Young, the official seconder of the Bill, and there was some repetition of the confusion which prevailed when Mr. Snowden's amendment to the Home Rule Bill was discussed. In this case, however, the Bill was talked out (Official Report, Col. 1467 *et seq.*, Vol. 62). It was claimed by the Anti-Suffragists that the insertion of this clause was responsible for the fact that no further progress was made.

### Other References in the House

A clause admitting all men and women to the franchise who had reached the age of twenty-one had also been inserted in the Government of Wales Bill, which was introduced by Mr. John on March 11. This Bill, however, made no further progress, and the subject was not discussed in this connection.

During the Third Reading of the Plural Voting Bill of this year—that is, on June 15—Lord Hugh Cecil made a vigorous protest similar to those made the previous year by Mr. Snowden, and Lord Lytton, on the failure of the Government to redeem its promises to women. He stated his own conviction that no member of the Government would act in a private capacity to any person whatsoever as the Government as a whole in its public capacity had acted towards the advocates and supporters of Woman's Suffrage, and that it was not realized how very great and deep the provocation had been which had led to the excesses which everybody deplored.

The only other occasion on which the burning question was

referred to was when a serious discussion took place as to what was to be done with those who could by no means be made amenable to the law they defied. We shall return to this debate later on.

### Deputation to the King

Early in January the W.S.P.U. had announced a deputation to lay their grievances in person before no other than the King himself. They pointed out that women had no other constitutional means of securing redress of those grievances, for owing to their voteless condition neither Parliament nor Ministers were responsible to them, so their case had never been fairly stated. It will be remembered that in 1909 the right of the subject to petition the King through his Ministers had been tried, and had failed. So one of the many grievances which women desired to ventilate was the failure of those same Ministers to pay any attention to them. It was also argued that women being without the vote, and not being represented by either Parliament or Ministers, all that they had was a Sovereign between whom and themselves the same relation existed as formerly existed between the King and his men subjects, before Parliamentary government existed, and when therefore the monarchy was unlimited. It was further pointed out that the situation was similar to that of the Irish Catholics, who in 1793 appealed to George III. against the refusal of the Irish Government (in the days when a Parliament sat in Dublin) to grant them the rights of citizens. On this occasion members of a deputation "fought their way through innumerable difficulties to the foot of the throne," to quote Wolfe Tone, and were very graciously received by the monarch (a fact which greatly displeased the Irish Government). Dundas, the English Home Secretary, who introduced the deputation at St. James's, defended the King's action in a long and able letter to the Lord Lieutenant. It was impossible, he said, that a respectful petition from a great

body of the King's subjects should not be presented, and it was equally impossible that it should be received with a "sullen silence." It was received, and the harshest disabilities of the Irish Catholics were removed in consequence.

It was in the hope that this precedent would be followed, and that the fundamental principle of the Great Charter ("Nulli negabimus, aut differemus rectum vel justitiam") would be put into practice, that preparations for the event went forward.

In February Mrs. Pankhurst wrote to the King, setting forth the woman's claim to an audience, and concluding with an appeal to be heard on behalf of the unhappy members of her sex, the sweated workers, white slaves, and others. A reply was received from the Home Office, some days later, in which it was stated that the Secretary of State had laid the petition before the King, but that he regretted that he had been unable to advise His Majesty to comply with the prayer thereof. Mrs. Pankhurst's reply respectfully informed the King that she would lead a deputation to Buckingham Palace, on a date shortly to be determined, for the purpose of claiming an audience, and entreated him to disregard the advice of his Ministers, and to grant it.

May 21 was the date selected, and it was arranged that the deputation should present itself at four in the afternoon. Shortly before that hour Mrs. Pankhurst emerged from a house in Grosvenor Place, accompanied by a large band of her followers, and made her way to the Wellington Arch, where an enormous crowd had assembled, and where the police were present in great force. The leader of the deputation was immediately arrested and carried off to Holloway, and thereupon scenes occurred in the immediate neighbourhood of the Palace which baffle description. Other parties of women arrived from other directions, to find their way barred by the police, and a free fight ensued. That the police received considerable provocation there can be no doubt; but, instead of



immediately effecting the arrest of offenders, they attacked them savagely, using their truncheons freely, backing their horses against the women, knocking them about, and otherwise illtreating them. Sworn statements were afterwards made by members of the deputation as to the treatment they and others had received. The fact that, of the hundreds of women who set out, only between sixty and seventy were arrested, is sufficient evidence that the object in view was not to arrest them if it could be avoided. Bail was not applied for, and the prisoners spent the night in the police cells, in acute discomfort, the heat being unusually intense.

### Police Court Scenes

The following day sixty-six Suffragettes appeared at Bow Street, when scenes of a remarkable character were witnessed. In accordance with the now general custom, the defendants kept up an incessant uproar. Names and addresses were in most cases refused, or fancy names, such as Nemesis and Charlotte Corday, were given. The prisoners were therefore designated by numbers, and arranged in special order in the charge-room. Here a game of "general post" appears to have been played; hats and other articles were exchanged, and other tricks played upon the bewildered police, with the result that a woman arrested on one charge by one policeman was charged by another for a totally different offence. The proceedings were further enlivened by the strains of a cornet, assiduously played by a male sympathizer in a neighbouring house.

In the Court the utmost confusion prevailed. Some of the defendants refused to stand up, or to answer to their names, fictitious or otherwise. Others turned their backs on the magistrate, and the assistance of constables had to be invoked to enforce these observances. Physical force was, however, unable to secure silence, and the noise was incessant and deafening. At one period, sympathizers in the Court joined

in the demonstration, and it was accordingly cleared after a violent struggle. On the other hand, some of the defendants declined to speak or to take any part in the proceedings. Others, more adventurous, threw packets of powder and other missiles about, and even a boot was hurled at the presiding magistrate, Sir John Dickinson, who caught it with dexterity. Most of the defendants, on refusing to be bound over, were discharged, and two were remanded to the London Sessions, where similar scenes took place a few days later. The defendants had, however, been on hunger strike by then for three or four days, and had to be helped into Court, where they lay in a state of semi-collapse, and their protests were more or less spasmodic (see *Evening News*, May 22, and other accounts).

The few sentences which were given varied from seven days to four months. The prisoners, however, appeared to care little whether they were sentenced for their own or somebody else's offence, whether for a long or short period. On reaching Holloway they were, if possible, more insubordinate than ever. Many of them refused to remove their clothes during the whole of the time they were detained; they also refused to be examined by the doctor, and with one accord they entered on the hunger strike, many of them refusing water as well.

The result was that within a few days all were again at liberty. As far as it has been possible to ascertain, only one or two rearrests were ever effected. Never, surely, in the history of the country has there been a parallel to such flagrant defiance on the one hand, and such impotence on the other.

### **Other Protests—Scene at the Drawing-Room**

A glance at the summary given above will show that the days immediately succeeding the day of the deputation were marked by further deeds of lawlessness, the result being that the National Gallery, the Wallace Collection, and later the Tate Gallery, were closed to the public. In addition to the events recorded in the table, window-breaking raids took

place in various parts of London, no arrests being made in the majority of cases. It is impossible, however, to give any exact account of what actually occurred, as information is not available. An event which created a great sensation was a protest made at His Majesty's Theatre on May 22, when the King and Queen, who were present, were addressed by one woman from the stage itself, while another, who spoke from the stalls, was found to have chained herself to her seat, and it was some time before she could be removed and order be restored. There were also several minor interruptions.

A few days later there was a dramatic scene at the Drawing-Room, which caused a great sensation in Court circles and elsewhere. As Miss Mary Blomfield, who had been presented on a previous occasion, came before the King, she dropped on her knees, and said in clear tones: "For God's sake, your Majesty, put a stop to forcible feeding." Court officials immediately stepped forward, and Miss Blomfield with her sister were led from the room.

Protests of all sorts and on all manner of occasions were prevalent throughout the year. Speeches were made, and leaflets dealing particularly with forcible feeding were distributed at theatres and restaurants; prayers were offered publicly in places of worship, and public men were relentlessly heckled, and in many cases prevented from speaking. Thus, at a great meeting at the London Opera House convened to welcome the nine deportees from South Africa on February 27, Mr. Ramsay Macdonald was shouted down, as, indeed, he was on many other occasions, notably in his own constituency. At a great rally of the I.L.P. at the Memorial Hall on March 4, at which he was the principal speaker, and Mr. W. C. Anderson, the chairman, wild scenes took place. A large number of Suffragettes supported by men sympathizers were present to ask him why he had not kept his Albert Hall pledge, to "turn the Government out";<sup>1</sup> and a free fight ensued, in the course

<sup>1</sup> See P. 217.

of which considerable damage was done to the furniture of the hall, and some sixty to seventy men and women were ejected with great violence.

The Bishops, too, received deputations of women, who literally forced themselves into their presence, and endeavoured to rouse them to an appreciation of the motives underlying the agitation, and of the unprecedented methods which were being employed to allay it, but with complete lack of success as far as any practical results were concerned.

The Bishop of London was induced to visit some of the prisoners in Holloway Gaol, when he made an abortive attempt to persuade them to give "undertakings," and thus secure release.

#### **Fourth Conspiracy Trial**

Although it was impossible to cope with the situation as a whole, the police were not inactive, for on May 21, the day of the deputation to the King, they made a raid on a flat in Maida Vale, and arrested five women, one of them a young girl of sixteen, and seized certain papers and other articles, which it was announced would furnish important evidence of a conspiracy. Among these articles were rubber ink rollers bearing such devices as "Stop Forcible Feeding."

The women were brought up the following morning at the Marylebone Police Court, and remanded, bail being refused. Two days later a raid was made on the office at Lincoln's Inn House, when the General Secretary was arrested. The charge against her was one of having been concerned with the five mentioned above, and they were brought before Mr. Paul Taylor as "loose, idle, and disorderly persons, suspected of having committed or being about to commit a felony, misdemeanour, or breach of the peace," and with conspiring together to commit malicious damage to property.

Four of the defendants, some of whom had been forcibly fed on remand, were discharged at different stages of the proceedings, but the trial of the other two lasted over a period of



seven weeks, during the whole of which time they were subjected to the process of forcible feeding. In spite of their condition, which was pitiable in the extreme, they persisted in the policy of keeping up a continual stream of interruption and protest in Court, and scenes of an unprecedented character took place both at Bow Street, where they were brought up four times, and at the Old Bailey, where they were brought up twice.

Eventually a sentence of three months' imprisonment was imposed, for the evidence was not of the importance anticipated. It will be remembered that the prisoners charged on previous occasions for conspiracy were allowed bail, and were thus in a better position to prepare their defence, and that eventually far heavier sentences had been imposed. These two prisoners were only released at the outbreak of war, having then been in prison and forcibly fed for no less than twelve weeks, for seven of these as unconvicted prisoners.

Mr. Wedgwood made repeated attempts in the House to draw attention to this matter, and elicited the admission from Mr. McKenna, on July 14, that a Home Office circular had been sent some years previously recommending that bail should be allowed when possible to prisoners on remand. Mr. Wedgwood thereupon endeavoured to move an adjournment of the House, but the Speaker would not allow it (Official Reports, Col. 1,718, Vol. 64).

### **Motion to reduce the Home Office Vote**

The situation became so acute that on June 11, during the debate on the Civil Service Estimates, Lord Robert Cecil brought forward a motion to reduce the Home Office Vote by £100, with a view to calling attention to the outrages by Suffragettes, and the conduct of the Government in dealing with them. A discussion took place, which was of a very indeterminate character, the only point which clearly emerged being the failure of the Cat and Mouse Act. No one opposed

the motion, and but few supported it, the majority of speakers contenting themselves with denouncing the Government, or enlarging on the impasse which had arisen, or making suggestions which found no support, or asking questions to which no reply was forthcoming. Among the latter were the following:

1. Whether the number of cases of arson and other crimes in which no conviction had been obtained could be given.

2. Whether it could be stated how many churches, houses, etc., had been burned or had been the scene of attempted arson by militant Suffragettes during the past five years.<sup>1</sup>

To the first question Mr. McKenna replied that he would return to the point, but sat down, and, indeed, left the Chamber without doing so. To the latter he replied that he had no complete statistics; he supposed that they could be gathered, but he doubted if they would be altogether accurate.

An attempt to answer both questions, particularly as far as the year 1914 is concerned, has been made in previous pages.

Lord Robert Cecil, in making his attack on the Government, and more especially on the Home Secretary, reviewed the history of the movement, and pointed out how the coercive policy of the Government in the early days, which had culminated in the events of "Black Friday," had been responsible for the more serious developments of later years. He maintained that forcible feeding had been a great mistake, that the Cat and Mouse Act had been wholly unsuccessful, and that the way the House had played with the question had been the greatest mistake of all. He insisted that the question must be treated with fairness and candour, and that anarchy must be put down. At the moment, he said, they had to deal, not with the root of the matter, but with the symptoms. He was in favour of attacking the funds of the W.S.P.U., and of the deportation of offenders, though he was not prepared to go into details regarding the latter project.

<sup>1</sup> The framing of this question shows some misapprehension of the actual state of affairs, for, as we have seen, three or four isolated cases of arson only had occurred before the year 1913.

In his reply, Mr. McKenna stated that the phenomenon with which they were confronted was absolutely without precedent; for, while the number engaged in the commission of crimes was comparatively small, the criminals "found so many sympathizers among the well-to-do and thoroughly respectable classes that the ordinary administration of the law was rendered comparatively impossible." He said that he had received "unlimited correspondence from every section of the public," advising him as to what ought to be done, and that among the various suggestions he had been unable to discover more than four alternatives. These suggestions, and Mr. McKenna's own replies, may be summarized as follows:

1. To let the prisoners die. This solution the Home Secretary described as the most popular at the time, judging by the number of letters he had received advocating it. He quoted the opinion of a "great medical expert," who had intimate knowledge of the Suffragettes from the first, and summed up his and his own (Mr. McKenna's) opinion on the subject, by stating that it would in all probability be the greatest incentive to militancy, if such a thing were allowed to happen. He pointed out that the offenders had a courage which stood at nothing, and prophesied a violent reaction of public opinion if twenty, thirty, or forty such deaths were to take place. He was also of opinion that no doctor could be found who would go on with such a thing, and said that he did not believe that such a policy would ever recommend itself to the British people, nor would he take a hand in carrying it out.

2. Deportation. Mr. McKenna pointed out that the problem would not be affected by removing it to a distance. The chosen locality would have to be treated as a prison or not, and in the former case the hunger strike would be persisted in, and in the latter escape would be possible, and would certainly take place.

3. To treat the prisoners as lunatics. To accomplish this, medical experts would have to give a certificate, and in no



case had they been willing to do so. "I cannot," he said, "get certification by Act of Parliament, contrary to the advice of medical opinion." So that suggestion was no good.

4. To grant the franchise. This solution could not be discussed, he said, in Committee of Supply, and in any case he did not think it could be seriously treated as a remedy for the existing state of lawlessness.

Mr. McKenna professed himself as by no means dissatisfied with the effect of previous legislation. He contended that since the passing of the Cat and Mouse Act the number of offences had been greatly reduced, but admitted that their seriousness had increased. He stated that a certain number of crimes were attributed to Suffragettes which were the work of real criminals, and that whatever damage had indeed been done by them was a drop in the ocean compared with the damage occurring through accident. He claimed that the Act had been absolutely efficacious in putting a stop to a certain kind of crime, but did not make it clear what kind he meant, and added that he believed that all who did them were hired for the purpose. As to punishment, he admitted that the prisoners might not get the precise punishment adjudicated by the magistrate, but asserted that nevertheless punishment did follow. These are his words used in describing the combined effects of forcible feeding and of the application of the Act:

"In my judgment, six or eight days of hunger and thirst strike is far more severe than two or three months' imprisonment under the ordinary conditions of prison life. . . . Perhaps they are discharged at the end of seven or eight days; what happens then? Their sentence remains open. . . . They are rearrested in two or three weeks, and go through it again. . . . If their offence has been a more serious offence, such as arson or the destruction of works of art, they are forcibly fed. . . . That is continued as long as their health will stand it. They are liberated, and the sentence still remains open. Is not that punishment?"



This can hardly be disputed, but it must be remembered that forcible feeding had been instituted for the benefit of the health of the prisoners, and that the Act had been introduced as an alternative to forcible feeding and as a means of insuring that the sentence pronounced by the Court should be enforced.

After devoting about three hours to this abortive discussion, the Committee passed on to other matters, and the House adjourned at 8.15, "without question put" (Official Reports, Col. 508 *et seq.*, Vol. 63).

At this point it may be interesting to give a résumé of the attention Parliament had given to the subject during the years 1906-1914. Only the most important debates are given. Reference to previous pages will show that the subject cropped up on many other occasions.

### Summary of Parliamentary Activity: 1906—1914

		<i>Approximate time occupied.</i>
1906.	March 2: Sir Charles Dilke's Bill talked out - - - - -	$\frac{1}{2}$ hour.
	April 25: Debate on Mr. Keir Hardie's resolution interrupted - - -	1 "
1907.	March 8: Mr. Dickinson's Bill talked out - - - - -	4 hours.
	March 13: Sir Charles McLaren's resolu- tion blocked	
1908.	February 28: Mr. Stanger's Bill passes Second Reading; majority, 179 -	4 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
	December: Public Meetings Bill (all stages) - - - - -	1 $\frac{1}{2}$ "
1909.	March 19: Mr. Howard's Bill passes Second Reading; majority, 35 -	4 "
	April 20: Houses of Parliament Bill; debate deferred - - - - -	3 "
1910.	July 11, 12: First Conciliation Bill passes Second Reading; majority, 109 - - - - -	2 days.
1911.	May 5: Second Conciliation Bill passes Second Reading; majority, 167   -	5 hours.

		<i>Approximate time occupied.</i>
1912.	March 28: Third Conciliation Bill fails to pass Second Reading by 14	4½ hours
	June 28: Motion to reduce Home Secretary's salary	5 "
	November 5: Mr. Snowden's amendment to Home Rule Bill rejected	4 "
1913.	January 23, 24, 27: Discussions on amendments to the Reform Bill (which is withdrawn)	12 <sup>1</sup> "
	March 18: Motion to reduce the Home Secretary's salary	7½ "
	April 2-23: Cat and Mouse Bill (all stages)	16 "
	May 5, 6: Mr. Dickinson's Bill fails to pass Second Reading by 47	14 "
1914.	May 5, 6: Lord Selborne's Bill fails to pass Second Reading (Lords) by 44	2 days.
	June 11: Motion to reduce Home Office Vote	3 hours.

Thus, in the nine years 1906 to 1914, 8 Second Reading debates took place in the House of Commons; 1 Second Reading debate took place in the House of Lords; 1 resolution was discussed, and one was blocked; amendments to two other Bills were discussed (or three, counting the Scottish Bill); on three occasions motions were brought forward to reduce the Home Office Vote; 3 coercive Bills were introduced, two of which became law.

In addition to all this, eight motions were brought forward for the adjournment of the House; on thirteen other occasions discussions on the subject arose; 27 Bills were read for the first time, but no further progress was made; nearly 1,000 questions dealing with the subject were asked.

<sup>1</sup> Altogether about 46 hours were devoted to the First Reading, Second Reading, and Committee stage of the Bill, which was withdrawn in consequence of the Speaker's ruling about the Woman Suffrage amendments.

### Summary of "Pledges" given during the same Period

With the above record of what was accomplished in the matter of legislation may be compared the following record of the various pledges given with regard to the subject:

- 1908 May 20: (To a deputation of Liberal Members, after the Second Reading of Mr. Stanger's Bill.) Mr. Asquith speaks of an Electoral Reform Bill, and undertakes that Women Suffrage amendments will not be opposed by the Government, provided that (1) they are on democratic lines, and (2) they are supported by the women of the country and by the electorate.
- 1909, December 10: (At a Liberal demonstration at the Albert Hall on the eve of the General Election.) Mr. Asquith says that, if his party survives the General Election, the cause shall be no worse off in the new Parliament than it had been in the old. "The Government . . . has no disposition or desire to burke the question," he said.
1910. November 22: (In the House, after the dissolution had been announced.) Mr. Asquith: "The Government will, if they are still in power, give facilities in the next Parliament for effectively proceeding with a Bill which is framed so as to admit of free amendment." This was after the Second Reading of the First Conciliation Bill.
1911. May 29: (In the House.) Mr. Lloyd George, speaking for the Premier, says that the Government is prepared to allot a week for the consideration of the Bill in 1912. This was after the Second Reading of the Second Conciliation Bill.
- June 16: (In a letter to Lord Lytton.) Mr. Asquith says the Government will be generous in their interpretation of the week offered, as they are "unanimous in their determination to give effect, not only in the letter, but in the spirit, to the promise in regard to facilities."
- August 23: (In a second letter to Lord Lytton.) Mr. Asquith: "I have no hesitation in saying that the

promises made by and on behalf of the Government . . . will be strictly adhered to both in the letter and in the spirit."

November 17: (To a deputation of women led by Mrs. Fawcett.) Mr. Asquith says that the Reform Bill outlined ten days previously will be drafted so as to admit of Woman Suffrage amendments, which will not be opposed by the Government, and will become an integral part of the Bill, if passed. Mr. Lloyd George repudiates the idea of any trick having been played, and tells the deputation that, if they find as a result of that "trick" that several million women have been added to the Bill, they will look very foolish.

November 27: Mr. Lloyd George having announced at Bath the fact that the Conciliation Bill has been "torpedoed," Mr. Asquith says in the House: "All pledges with regard to the Conciliation Bill remain in full force."

[This Bill is given its *coup de grâce* on March 28, 1912, and on January 27, 1913, the Speaker rules that the Woman Suffrage amendments to the Reform Bill will, if passed, so alter the Bill as to necessitate its withdrawal. On the motion of the Premier, it is withdrawn there and then.]

### Activities of the East London Federation of the Suffragettes

Miss Sylvia Pankhurst's campaign in East London had all this time been steadily progressing, with the result that many men and women in that part of London became ardent supporters of the cause, and that scenes of a unique and dramatic character were witnessed in the first six months of 1914.

When Mr. Sydney Buxton was appointed Governor-General of South Africa, the Federation entered the field against his successor at Poplar in February, and Miss Sylvia Pankhurst who, it will be remembered, was a "mouse," went secretly to the committee-rooms, and worked there during the campaign, and spoke each night from an upper window. She also took part in a procession organized on the eve of the poll, and



even spoke at a great open-air meeting at the dock gates, without, however, being molested in any way.

Having, however, been rearrested early in the following month when on her way to another demonstration in Trafalgar Square, and once more released a week later, she took part in a demonstration held by the Federation on Mothering Sunday, March 22, when another procession was made from Bow to Westminster Abbey, to pray for the granting of votes to women. Miss Pankhurst being still far too ill to walk, her followers gathered so zealously round the invalid carriage in which she was reclining that it was put out of commission. Volunteers thereupon came forward, and carried her in relays of six to Westminster. Admission to the Abbey was refused, on the ground that it was already full, and a service was conducted outside by the Rev. C. A. Wills.

### Scene at Poplar Borough Council

As a result of the police raid on Bow Baths in October, 1913, the Poplar Borough Council refused to allow the Suffragettes to hire the three largest halls in the district. A meeting of protest was held in December of that year, which, however, did not lead to anything more serious than hooting outside the houses of hostile Borough Councillors, and an encounter with the police, followed by the usual crop of arrests. A more ridiculous and therefore more serious aspect was given to the situation the following March, when a party of men and women stormed the Council Chamber, to make their protest in person. A free fight took place between the Councillors and the invaders, when flour, stones, waterbottles, and even chairs, were used as weapons of offence and defence. The police were summoned, but they declined to enter the building, and it has to be recorded that the Councillors withdrew, leaving their assailants in possession. Some of these thereupon mounted the rostrum and delivered impromptu speeches (*Daily News*, March 27).

### May Day Celebrations

On May 24 a Women's May Day was celebrated for the second time in Victoria Park. Miss Pankhurst being now sufficiently recovered to be able to walk, her rearrest was deemed to be more likely, and she was escorted to the park surrounded by a "bodyguard" of twenty men and women, who took the precaution of chaining themselves together. This, however, did not long resist the onslaught of mounted police, who once more bore off their prey to gaol.

When, six days later, Miss Pankhurst was again released, no time was lost in organizing a deputation to the Prime Minister from East London. Members of the deputation were elected, and the demand to be made was agreed upon, at three large meetings which took place in separate districts. It was agreed to demand a vote for every woman over twenty-one years of age, and June 10 was the day fixed for waiting on Mr. Asquith. He repeatedly refused to receive the deputation, in spite of Miss Pankhurst's assurance that in the event of this occurring, and of her being once more arrested, she would continue her hunger and thirst strike both in prison and at the Strangers' Entrance to the House of Commons, until either the deputation should be received or her death should occur. This promise was faithfully kept.

On the day fixed, two processions started from the East India Docks and from Miss Pankhurst's house in Old Ford Road, respectively, to march to the House of Commons. On this occasion Miss Pankhurst had not gone far, when the police bore down in large numbers, and carried her off on her stretcher. (It was but ten days since her last release.)

This time Miss Pankhurst was kept in prison for eight days, and immediately on her release, June 18, she was driven to the House of Commons, and lay down on the steps of the small door beside the Strangers' Entrance. The police were present in strong force, and were just about to drag her up and order

her away, when a message was received from the Prime Minister, consenting to receive the deputation two days later. The indomitable woman then consented to be taken home and nursed back to health, and she was not again arrested. As, however, she had served more than half her three months' sentence, in nine instalments, it may possibly have been claimed that here was an instance of the satisfactory manner in which the Cat and Mouse Act worked.

### Interview with the Prime Minister

Mr. Asquith on his part faithfully kept the promise elicited under such dramatic circumstances, and received the deputation as arranged, on June 20. The demands of the six women who had this audience, included, in addition to the vote for every woman over twenty-one years of age, the unconditional release of Miss Sylvia Pankhurst, and also of another member of the Federation, who a few days previously had also been sentenced under the Act of Edward III. for an "inciting" speech.

In the course of his reply, Mr. Asquith said that the substance of the case which had been presented to him amounted to this, that economic conditions being what they were, unless women had a voice in choosing representatives for Parliament, "substantial and intelligent reform was not possible in the way of legislation, or perhaps in the way of administration." He declined to argue the matter, but promised to take all he had heard (illustrations drawn from the practical experience of the speakers) into careful consideration. He added: "If the change has to come, we must face it boldly, and make it thorough-going and democratic."

This reply was hailed in the Press as a great advance on Mr. Asquith's previous statements. "A most happy augury," said the *Manchester Guardian*. "A distinct step forward," said the *New Statesman*. "We heartily welcome the unmishtakable softening of Mr. Asquith's attitude," said the *Christian*

*Commonwealth*; while the *Nation* declared that a new chapter of hope in the history of the question had been begun, and added: "Nothing less than the powerful opposition of the Prime Minister could have delayed it during the last three years. . . . The tone of Mr. Asquith's answer. . . makes for the hope that his attitude in future will be less unqualified."

After this important event the Federation settled down to steady work, which the declaration of war altered, but did not impede.

### Arrest of Other Prominent Suffragettes

Throughout the year the Government steadily pursued its policy of persecuting those known to take a prominent part in the movement. On May 6 Mrs. Drummond and Mrs. Dacre Fox were served with summonses for delivering inciting speeches, and, instead of appearing at the police court, the former took refuge on Lord Lansdowne's doorstep, and the latter on Sir Edward Carson's. Their reasons for doing so were communicated to these two gentlemen in letters which drew a parallel between their advocacy of armed resistance in Ulster and the militancy which had been advocated by those who sought their protection. Mrs. Dacre Fox reminded Lord Lansdowne that he had praised what he had described as "the extraordinary efficiency of the arrangements" in connection with the gun-running in Ulster, and of these passages from his speeches: "We are all law-abiding people in this country, but there sometimes comes a point when even the most law-abiding citizen will turn"; and again: "One recalls naturally that Pharaoh remained impervious to argument until things had become extremely uncomfortable for him in Egypt." Mrs. Drummond said to Sir Edward Carson, that, noticing that the Government did not attack him, she had come to consult him as to how she too might secure immunity from arrest and imprisonment.

Both were arrested, and appeared before Mr. Horace Smith



the following morning at Westminster Police Court, when they were separately tried. Mrs. Dacre Fox insisted on giving her views of the system and proceedings under which she and others were being persecuted, while male militants were left unmolested. She also dwelt at some length on the rebellion of women against their own exploitation, economically, politically, and sexually. While she was speaking, the officials continued the usual procedure, which under the circumstances became a kind of game of "dumb crambo," and Mrs. Dacre Fox was sentenced to a month's imprisonment, without a syllable of the evidence having been audible to those in Court, and without being herself aware that she had been sentenced.

After several ordinary cases had been dealt with, Mrs. Drummond entered the Court, with a cheery "Good-morning, ladies and gentlemen," and, without pausing for a reply, proceeded to give her views of the situation. Totally ignoring the legal proceedings which were taking place in an undertone, she insisted on reading extracts from the speeches of Ulster militants, and when she, too, was sentenced to a month's imprisonment, it became necessary for the attendant constables to bear her bodily from the Court. With what success, from the legal point of view, these sentences were carried out must be told in few words.

Mrs. Dacre Fox was released four days later, and spoke at the weekly meeting of the W.S.P.U. at Knightsbridge shortly after. She was rearrested on July 5 outside Westminster Abbey, after making a public appeal to the Bishop of London, who was preaching at the afternoon service that Sunday, and again on July 30, outside Buckingham Palace. Mrs. Drummond, on her release on May 21, refused to give an address to which to be taken, and was driven off to Highgate Infirmary, where, however, she was refused admission. She was then driven to Mr. McKenna's house, where she was again arrested, and taken in an ambulance to Rochester Row. The charge of "obstruction" was preferred, and she was kept in the cells

all night, the intention being to bring her up the following morning at Bow Street, when those arrested in connection with the deputation to the King also appeared. By that time she was suffering from an acute attack of pleurisy, and, the charge of obstruction being withdrawn, she was removed to a nursing home. On her recovery she was once more arrested on the old charge, and detained for six days.

The last to be arrested was one who had been somewhat prominent during the absence of other leaders, who in July was charged with "incitement," and sentenced to two months' imprisonment. She was released on July 21 after six days' imprisonment. A similar charge was preferred against a provincial organizer, who after much trouble was sentenced on June 13 (for a speech she had made three months earlier) to six months' imprisonment. Ten days of this sentence were served.

### **Meeting at Holland Park Skating Rink**

The W.S.P.U. held one more great meeting, this time at the Holland Park Skating Rink, on July 16. When so many of the prominent members of the Union were either in prison or recovering from the effects of imprisonment, such a meeting might easily have been a fiasco. The hall was, however, crowded, and, being reserved for women, many men, even well-known sympathizers, were turned away. Mrs. Pankhurst had been rearrested a week previously on leaving Lincoln's Inn House, where she had that morning openly resumed work. She had been released after her ninth hunger and thirst strike on a four days' licence, which had expired the day before the meeting. Nevertheless she made arrangements to attend it, and an ambulance drew up at the door of the nursing home to convey her thither. This was immediately surrounded by the police, one of whom took the place of the chauffeur, and when Mrs. Pankhurst was carried out the ambulance was driven off to Holloway. On this occasion, in spite of her weak

condition, Mrs. Pankhurst was treated more inconsiderately than usual, and was submitted to the superfluous indignity of being stripped and searched, a process which she resisted to the utmost of her enfeebled strength.

Meanwhile the meeting became one of hot protest on her behalf. In spite of determined efforts on the part of a mob outside to force an entrance, and in spite of everything which had occurred to mar the proceedings, scenes of great enthusiasm were witnessed, and the collection amounted to £16,350. Two "mice"—Miss Annie Kenney and Mrs. Dacre Fox—appeared no one knew how, and after delivering speeches which were certainly inspiring to some, and might have been considered as "inciting" by others, they disappeared in equally mysterious fashion. Messages were read from Mrs. Pankhurst and her daughter Christabel announcing that the policy of the Union must be one of determined resistance, and a resolution protesting against the coercive measures adopted by the Government, demanding the instant passage of a Votes for Women measure, and pledging those present to continue the fight until such a measure should be placed on the Statute Book, was once more carried with acclamation.

### **The International Woman Suffrage Alliance**

In the foregoing pages no attempt has been made to trace the development of the international movement of Woman's Suffrage, for an account of the struggle in the United Kingdom has alone been attempted. That account may, however, not unfittingly be concluded with a reference to a meeting of the officers and presidents of the associations affiliated to the International Woman Suffrage Alliance which was held in London in July, 1914, and in particular to a meeting held in a Committee-room of the House on July 14, when the delegates were welcomed by Parliamentary supporters drawn from all parties.

Mr. Dickinson was in the chair, and the Unionist and Labour



parties were represented by Lord Robert Cecil and Mr. Ramsay Macdonald respectively, the arrangements being made by Mr. Henderson. The opinion was freely expressed that the time for the enfranchisement of the women of this country was not far distant, while Mr. Acland (who brought a message for Sir Edward Grey) said it was his strong conviction that the next Government, whatever it might be, would have to deal with the question as a party measure.

Mrs. Chapman Catt, in returning thanks, made a magnificent appeal to the supporters of the cause to lift this great international question to a higher plane, adding that international Suffragists still hoped that Great Britain would lead the world in the movement, and that she felt it an honour to meet men who had stood by the women of England in times of doubt and difficulty. The cause was already won, she asserted, as far as public opinion and argument were concerned.

### Outbreak of War

It was but ten days after the event just recorded that the European situation began to assume a threatening aspect, and on Tuesday, August 4, as all must but too well remember, there was no longer any doubt as to whether this country would be involved in the conflagration, for at 11 p.m. that night war was declared on Germany.

Nearly a week elapsed before the fate of the Suffrage prisoners undergoing sentence or on remand was decided. What pourparlers took place during that time was never made known, and Mr. McKenna merely announced in the House on August 11 that he had advised His Majesty to remit the remainder of the prisoners' sentences, adding that this course had been taken without any solicitation on their part, and without requiring any undertaking from them. His Majesty was confident, he said, that they would respond to the feelings of their countrymen and countrywomen, and that they "could be trusted not to stain the cause they had at heart by any



further crime or disorder." Individual prisoners, on being informed of this, replied that they never had done anything to stain their cause, and all were unconditionally released.

So the scenes of horror which had taken place in Holloway and other prisons for the best part of five years, in the unavailing effort to govern women against their consent, and which had reached a climax during the summer of 1914, abruptly ceased, and no less abrupt must be the cessation of this narrative at this point. Much has happened since this date in connection with the Woman's Movement; but these events must be recorded by another pen, which will doubtless be able to place on record the final triumph of a cause which has called forth such extraordinary devotion, sacrifice, and endurance, as recorded in these pages.

The vote is, however, but a symbol, and the struggle for it but a phase, in the still greater struggle for emancipation in its widest sense, whether of the individual, the class, or the community.

The part which the women of the country have played in the colossal struggle still being waged is too well recognized to need more than a passing tribute of respect and appreciation. Some will see, in the admittedly indispensable services that women have rendered during the war, a reason to revise their former views as to the place they are qualified to fill in the scheme of existence, and will even urge that they have earned the right to vote. Others, with perhaps a wider outlook and deeper insight, will rejoice in the breaking down of the artificial barriers which have hitherto restricted woman's efforts, and, amid all the present tumult and confusion, will look forward to the dawn of a new era, wherein the services of all shall be utilized to their fullest capacity, and wherein woman, no longer under tutelage and subjection, shall freely and gladly play her part.

## APPENDIX TO PART V

**Prisoners' Temporary Discharge for Ill-Health Bill, 1913**

I. (1) If the Secretary of State is satisfied that by reason of the condition of a prisoner's health it is undesirable to retain him in prison, but that, such condition of health being due in whole or in part to the prisoner's *own conduct* in prison, it is desirable that his release should be temporary and conditional only, the Secretary of State may, if he thinks fit, having regard to all the circumstances of the case, by order authorize the temporary discharge of the prisoner for such period, and subject to such conditions, as may be stated in the order.

(2) Any prisoner so discharged shall comply with any conditions stated in the order of temporary discharge, and shall return to prison at the expiration of the period stated in the order, or of such extended period as may be fixed by any subsequent order of the Secretary of State; and if the prisoner fails so to comply or return, he may be arrested without warrant and taken back to prison.

(3) Where a prisoner under sentence is discharged in pursuance of an order of temporary discharge, the currency of the sentence shall be suspended from the day on which he is discharged from prison, under the order, to the day on which he is received back into prison, so that the former day shall be reckoned and the latter shall not be reckoned as part of the sentence.

(4) Where an order of temporary discharge is made in the case of a prisoner not under sentence, the order shall contain conditions requiring the attendance of the prisoner at any further proceedings on his case at which his presence may be required.

II. (1) Where the prisoner is undergoing a sentence of penal servitude, the powers under this Act shall be in addition to, and not in substitution for, the power of granting licences under the Penal Servitude Acts, 1853-1891.

(2) Nothing in this Act shall affect the duties of the medical officers of a prison in respect of a prisoner whom the Secretary of State does not think fit to discharge under this Act.

III. In the application of this Act to Scotland and Ireland, references to the Secretary of State shall be construed as references to the Secretary for Scotland and the Lord Lieutenant respectively.

The conditions of release, which were not incorporated in the statute, were as follows:

I. The prisoner shall return to the above-mentioned prison on the                      of                      19                      .

II. The period of temporary discharge granted by this order may, if the Secretary of State thinks fit, be extended on a representation by the prisoner that the state of                      health renders                      unfit to return to prison. If such representation be made, the prisoner shall submit                      self, if so required, for medical examination by the medical officer of the above-mentioned prison, or other registered medical practitioner appointed by the Secretary of State.

III. The prisoner shall notify to the Commissioner of Police of the Metropolis the place of residence to which                      goes on discharge. The prisoner shall not change                      residence without giving one clear day's previous notice in writing to the Commissioner, specifying the residence to which                      is going, and                      shall not be temporarily absent from residence for more than twelve hours without giving a like notice.

IV. The prisoner shall abstain from any violation of the law.<sup>1</sup>

If                      fails to comply with any of the foregoing conditions, the prisoner is liable to be arrested and taken back to prison. While                      is at large under this Order, the currency of sentence is suspended.

<sup>1</sup> A law to enforce abstention from any violation of the law on the part of any person, more especially a convicted prisoner, is surely unique in the history of jurisprudence.

**Representation of the People Bill, 1913****A BILL TO CONFER THE PARLIAMENTARY FRANCHISE ON WOMEN****I. Every woman who**

- (a) If she were a man would be entitled to be registered as a Parliamentary elector in respect of a household qualification within the meaning of the Representation of the People Act, 1884, *or*
- (b) Is the wife of a man entitled to be registered in respect of a household qualification, and has resided in the qualifying premises during the period required by law to enable a person to be so registered, Shall be entitled to be registered and when registered to vote as a Parliamentary elector in the constituency wherein the qualifying premises are situate.

II. A woman shall not be entitled to be registered unless she has attained the age of twenty-five years.

III. A woman shall not be disqualified by reason of marriage from being registered and voting.

**Woman's Enfranchisement Bill (Lords)****AN ACT TO ENABLE WOMEN TO VOTE AT PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS.**

I. Any woman shall be qualified to be registered in a constituency as a Parliamentary elector, and whilst so registered shall be entitled to vote at an election of a member or members to serve in Parliament for that constituency, if she is a Local Government elector for the purposes of any Local Government election in that constituency.



## SUFFRAGE DIRECTORY

ACTRESSES' FRANCHISE LEAGUE, 93, Oakley Street, S.W.3.  
Tel. 3880 Western.

ARTISTS' SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, 27, Trafalgar Square, Chelsea,  
S.W.

AUSTRALIAN AND NEW ZEALAND VOTERS' ASSOCIATION and  
BRITISH DOMINIONS WOMAN SUFFRAGE UNION, c/o Inter-  
national Women's Franchise Club, 9, Grafton Street,  
Piccadilly, W.1.

CATHOLIC WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY, 55, Berners Street,  
Oxford Street, W.1.

CHURCH LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 6, York Buildings,  
Adelphi, W.C.2. Tel. 2500 Regent.

CIVIL SERVICE SUFFRAGE SOCIETY, 56, Squire's Lane, Finchley,  
N.3.

CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ASSO-  
CIATION, 48, Dover Street, Piccadilly, W.1. Tel. 886  
Mayfair.

CONSERVATIVE AND UNIONIST WOMEN'S FRANCHISE ASSO-  
CIATION (Irish Branch), 17, Lower Mount Street, Dublin.

FORWARD CYMRIC SUFFRAGE UNION, 69, Wimpole Street, W.1.  
Tel. 1835 Paddington.

FREE CHURCH LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 13, Bream's  
Buildings, Chancery Lane, W.C.2. Tel. 2120 Central.

FRIENDS' LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 5, Madingly  
Road, Cambridge.

HASTINGS AND ST. LEONARD'S WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE PROPA-  
GANDA LEAGUE, 1, St. Paul's Place, St. Leonards-on-Sea.

INDEPENDENT WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION, 30,  
Chester Terrace, Chelsea, S.W.1.

- INTERNATIONAL SUFFRAGE SHOP, 5, Duke Street, Adelphi, W.C.2. Tel. 5202 Gerrard.
- INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FRANCHISE CLUB, 9, Grafton Street, W.1. Tel. 3932 Mayfair.
- INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE ALLIANCE, 11, Adam Street, Adelphi, W.C.2. Tel. 4255 Regent.
- IRISH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION, 163, Rathgar Road, Dublin.
- IRISH WOMEN'S FRANCHISE LEAGUE, Westmoreland Chambers, Westmoreland Street, Dublin.
- IRISH WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE FEDERATION, 19, Southwick Street, W.2. Tel. 6474 Paddington.
- JEWISH LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 32, Hyde Park Gardens, W.2.
- LIBERAL MEN'S NATIONAL ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE (Northern Division,) 17, Nicholas Street, Manchester.
- LIBERAL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE UNION, 29, Denison House, 296, Vauxhall Bridge Road, S.W.1. Tel. 7223 Victoria.
- LONDON GRADUATES' UNION FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, Chester Gate, Ealing.
- LONDON HEAD TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION, St. Bride Foundation Institute, Bride Lane, Fleet Street, E.C.4.
- LONDON SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 58, Victoria Street, S.W.1. Tel. 3119 Victoria.
- MARCHERS' QUI VIVE CORPS, Duncton, Petworth, Sussex.
- MEN'S LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 1, Harcourt Buildings, E.C.4. Tel. 3159 Central.
- MUNSTER WOMEN'S FRANCHISE LEAGUE, Crescent View, Limerick.
- NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR ADULT SUFFRAGE, c.o. United Suffragists, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.2.
- NATIONAL INDUSTRIAL AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETY, 33, Fitzroy Square, W.1. Tel. 4478 Regent.
- NATIONAL LEAGUE FOR OPPOSING WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 515, Caxton House, Tothill Street, S.W.1. Tel. 1418 Gerrard.
- NATIONAL POLITICAL REFORM LEAGUE, Bank Buildings, 16, St. James's Street, S.W.1. Tel. 334 Gerrard.

- NATIONAL UNION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES, Parliament Chambers, 14, Great Smith Street, S.W.1. Tel. 4673 Victoria.
- NEW CONSTITUTIONAL SOCIETY FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 8, 9, Park Mansions Arcade, Knightsbridge, S.W.1. Tel. 2289 Kensington.
- NORTHERN MEN'S FEDERATION FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 6, Wellington Road, St. John's Wood, N.W.8.
- SCOTTISH CHURCHES' LEAGUE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE, 11, Howe Street, Edinburgh. Tel. 7015 Central.
- SCOTTISH FEDERATION OF WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE SOCIETIES, 2, St. Andrew Square, Edinburgh.
- SCOTTISH UNIVERSITY WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE UNION, 46, Cranley Gardens, S.W.7. Tel. 5473 Kensington.
- SUFFRAGETTES OF THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION, 145, High Holborn, W.C.1.
- SUFFRAGIST CHURCHWOMEN'S PROTEST COMMITTEE, 21, Downside Crescent, Hampstead, N.W.3. Tel. 2960 Hampstead.
- UNITED SUFFRAGISTS, 27, Chancery Lane, W.C.2. Tel. 5880 Holborn.
- WOMEN'S FREEDOM LEAGUE, 144, High Holborn, W.C.1. Tel. 1429 Museum.
- WOMEN SANITARY INSPECTORS' SUFFRAGE SOCIETY, 24, Lowman Road, Holloway, N.7.
- WOMEN'S SOCIAL AND POLITICAL UNION, 114, Great Portland Street, W.1. Tel. 1882 Mayfair.
- WOMEN'S TAX RESISTANCE LEAGUE, 3, Gloucester Walk, Kensington, W. 8.
- WOMEN TEACHERS' FRANCHISE UNION, 27, Murillo Road, Lee, S.E.
- WOMEN WRITERS' SUFFRAGE LEAGUE, 42, West Cromwell Road, S.W.5.
- WORKERS' SUFFRAGE FEDERATION, 400, Old Ford Road, Bow, E.3. Tel. 1787 East.

N.B.—Every effort has been made to render the above list accurate and up to date at the time of going to press (March, 1917). In several cases, the address given is that of a private individual who is dealing with correspondence, during the suspension of activities necessitated by war conditions. Address in such cases : The Hon. Secretary.

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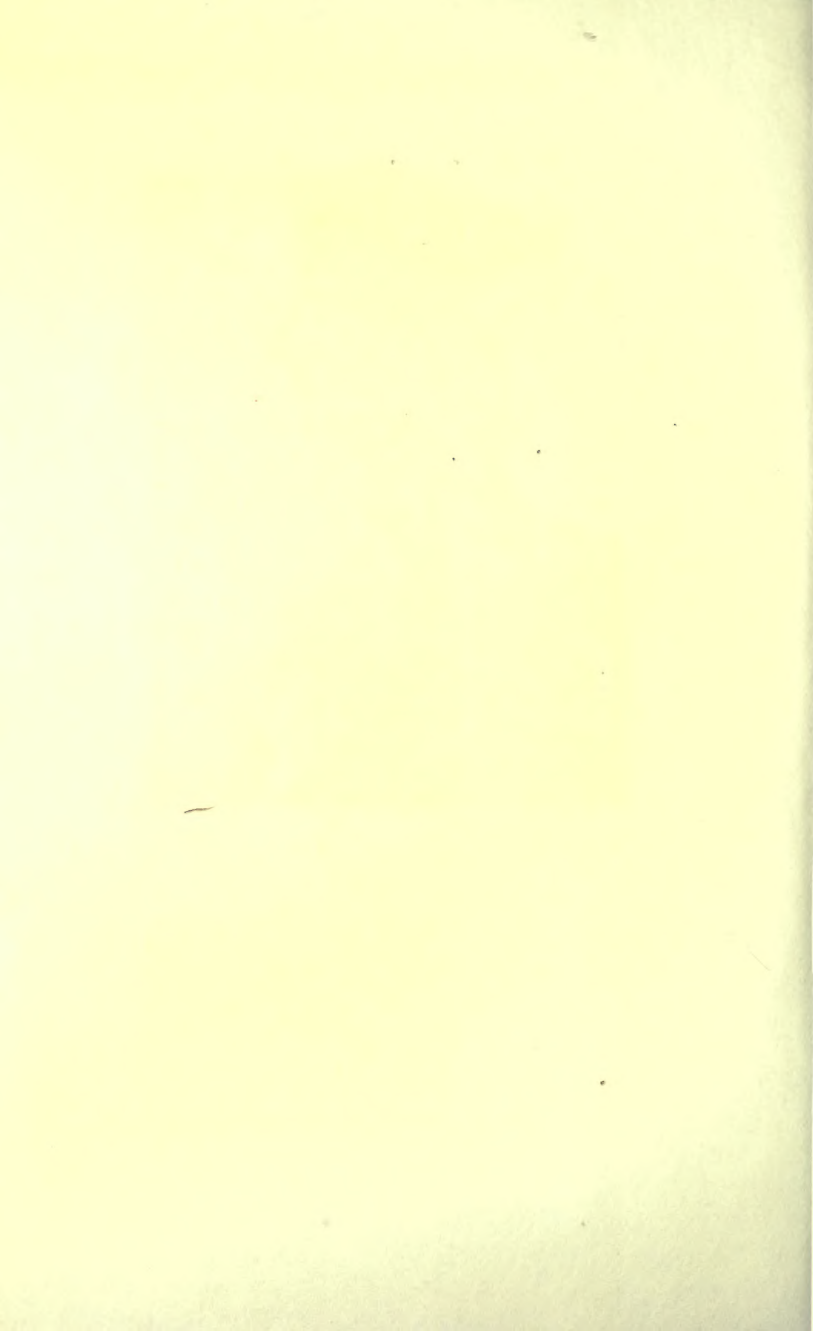
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